

V. Bellarmine (R.) Com.

Ouranography:
O R
Heaven Opened.

The SUBSTANCE of
Cardinal BELLARMINE'S
FIVE BOOKS

Concerning the
Eternal Felicity of the Saints.

· Publish'd in *Latin* 94 Years ago.
And now made *English*; With some
few Variations.

By B. JENKS, Rector of *Harley* in
Shropshire, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable the Earl of *Bradford*.

— *Fas est & ab Hoste doceri.*
Ubi bene, Nemo melius.

L O N D O N:
Printed for W. Rogers at the Sun against St. Dunstan's
Church; and B. Tooke at the Middle-Temple-Gate,
in Fleetstreet. M DCC X.



To the Right Honourable

T H E

Earl of *Bradford*,

Lord Lieutenant of the County
of *Salop* ; and One of Her
Majesties most Honourable
Privy-Council.

My Lord,

I Must deny my self the Liberty of
Expatriating upon the usual Subject
of Dedications ; Least I should
create Uneasiness to one that I know
had rather hear any thing than his own
Praises. But this being the first Publi-
A 3 *cation*

cation that I have made since your Lordship became my Patron, I shall presume on your Pardon for Honouring my self so far as to put it into your Honour's hands. Tho the Present which here I make be such as may at first surprize your Lordship, considering where I had it, and who was the Composer of it: Yet if I have rescued a beautiful Banner out of the Enemies Tents, where I found some of our own Truths well dress'd and finely Adorn'd, I hope your Lordship will like the Notions never the worse, that they are none of my Own, when you'll find 'em much superior to any of Mine. The most that I can here pretend being but to make 'em Palatable to the English Reader, and Inoffensive to such as may mistrust the unfriendly Author.

But Truth is never the Less it self, whoever speaks it. Even a false Prophet
Numb. 23, & 4. once gave out such glorious Truths as still shine
bright in two Chapters of our Bible. So
can be that does Wonders Over-rule
even the very worst Instruments, to make
'em

The Dedication.

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'em serve some of the best Purposes. And nothing but what I dare recommend to your Lordship, will appear in this Enterprize, as now revis'd and corrected. For should I offer to such Hands but the least that were not Orthodox, I am sure your Lordship would be one of the first to Detect it, and could not Forgive it. But I am persuaded 'twill give your Honour no less Satisfaction in the Perusing, than I had in the Translating; When here, my Lord, you'll find the Solution of Sampson's Riddle, Out of the Eater came forth Meat, and out of the Strong, Sweetness. Thus even a dead Mercury may point us right to the City where we wou'd be, towards which it self never moves. And an amiable Representation of the End is no small Attractive, to Invigorate our Progress upon the Way. Therefore, I cannot but thankfully accept the friendly Office even from any Hand, that will but set in a fair Light before me the Continuing City which we seek to come: When so engaging is the Kindness, thus to Win us into our own Happiness; where too oft-

iv The Dedication.

*en so dull we are, as to Forget it ; Tea,
so much worse than Dull, to Contemn it ;
and throw away even to the World's End,
what we do not know how Near it is at
hand.*

*The Age of your Chaplain, my Lord,
being his Monitor, to give notice that
he's ready to touch the End of his Course,
makes him the more Inquisitive, to Pry
into that World, whither he is hasting ;
and to get such an Inviting Prospect,
that instead of shrinking back, he may
Long to be there. And knowing your
Lordship also to be sensible, that your
self has no surer Footing upon the pre-
sent Stage ; I am bold to offer to your
Lordship's Contemplation, that which may
prove abundantly more Alluring, than all
the Biggest and Finest of your Advantages
here on Earth are Tempting. Together
with the Way also (in variety of Paths)
here described, to get safe unto that bles-
sed Journey's End.*

*And having found this Entertainment
so Relishing to my self, that I could not
but*

The Dedication. v

but wish the best and greatest of my Friends might Participate ; Did I not count your Lordship in the Head of that Number, I should tax my self as guilty of somewhat worse than a bad Memory. To your Service therefore, my Lord, do I humbly tender this Draught of a Nobler World, than Eyes of Flesh did ever behold : In which you'll meet with a rich Variety more than ordinary, and a great deal of refined Christianity, with many curious Thoughts and uncommon Strokes, very sublime and Heavenly : Yet no less Delighting than Surprizing.

And with some Characters here given of such as shall dwell in God's Holy Place I could not but greatly Please my self, To observe so apparent a Congruity to the Person well known to your Lordship. In whom are so conspicuous the Humblest Condescension even to Men of the Lowest condition ; and no such Valuation of the present Honour, as to blind the eyes from seeing a far Higher Glory ; or to obstruct the Care of seeking that Honour which comes from God only : And who has

also the Large Heart, as well as Estate, To do still the more Good, the more Accession there is to the World's Good; Carrying such a wise Remembrance of the Stewardship, as to look out beyond Self and Family, to those great Offices of true Nobility, Mercy, and Charity, which are most like to secure the never-ending Comfort of that most joyful Sentence, Well done, good and Faithful Servant, &c.

For you well know, my Lord, 'Tis a most scandalous Asperſion upon our holy Profession, That we explode Good Works, as Popish: When we plead for these Works, as the needful Test of our Christianity; and condemn only the Conceit of Merit, for a piece of Popery. Our Religion teaching us, to be ever Looking unto Jesus, our Saviour; (Tho' not to pay such Superstition as they do at Rome, to his Name:) To build our main Hopes upon his sole Merits, and to take our Faith in him, for one of the firmest Grounds of our Expectation from him: Yet never to Acquiesce in any Faith, but what we can shew by our Works,
and

The Dedication. vii

and what helps us to Overcome the World, even so, as to account all in it but as Dung, that we may Win Christ : Tea, to take such our Contempt of all things on Earth, as one of our best Evidences for Heaven.

My Lord,

I depend much upon your Lordship's Candor, and your Goodness of Principle, as well as Taste, for the favourable Acceptance of such Doctrine, as I know to be very little Relish'd by many of the Age, who think themselves Masters of the finest Palates ; (Tho' fitter, it may be, to Judge of somewhat else, than what relates to the Life hereafter : Which if they'd be thought to Admire, 'tts only, That any should be so silly, as to Believe it.) But I am confident of your Lordship's better Sense, and brighter Example, than to scorn things of this Nature, as only the Trade of the Preacher.

I need not (for my own part,) fear the censure of Declaiming against the World,
out

out of any Pique at it, after so Long and Easy Enjoyment as I have had of it ; Enough to cure me, for ever seeking any greater Matters in it. Tet-so easily can I see thro' all, even its most Promising Fruitions, as to be fully satisfy'd, There's no Satisfaction for the Soul of Man ever to be found in 'em : And that to have more in our Hands, is but to have the more Cumber and Danger ; and not find our selves a jot the Easier, or the Happier. So that 'tis only in the hour of Temptation, that we can count it so Good to be here, as not to care for the Thoughts of Moving hence.

And upon this account, I must profess my self Beholden even to the Enemy of my Religion, for telling me more here in this Discourse, than all the rest of my Books (one excepted,) do discover : To set off the Joy of Salvation in such a noble Ouranography, and intelligent Express from the Heavenly Countrey, such a fine Chart and Plan of the Glorious City, That I know not who has gone such Lengths, or descended to such Circumstances, or Criticiz'd on so many Particulars,

culars, Lying out of the way of common Notice. And tho' the Argumentation may, here and there, carry some Tincture of Imagination, yet will I count it a happy Fancy that pleases me into my Duty. Especially, When holy Scripture it self does thus stoop to our Low Capacity; and in the present state of Imperfection and Obscurity, where we see and know so very little of any thing, (and still Less of what's Heavenly,) in its native Truth and reality; We must be content with such figurative Schemes, and Analogical Representations, as give us the most Lively affecting Ideas, that we can now tell how to frame in our minds; Tho' they fall exceeding short still of the things themselves; and Leave us to make Quarles's Apology,

Excuse my bold Attempt, and pardon me

For shewing Sense, what Faith alone should see.

Now, my Lord, The same do I sincerely wish and Pray for your Honour, as for my self; That we may not only walk such Higher Grounds of Contemplation, for
our

X

The Dedication.

our Diversion; and get up to the Top of this Mount Pisgah, barely to take a fine Prospect of Canaan, and entertain our Fancy in Surveying the Promised Land, our better Countrey: But may pursue the right and sure Way, to bring us into the happiest Fruition of that most Glorious Indefeasible Possession. And if I can but contribute any thing at all to such an extremely Desirable End, 'Twill be the only Means in my Power of Discharging the great Debt that is owing to my Lord,
From

Your LORDSHIP's

Many ways Obliged,

In all humble Observance,

And the most faithful Duty,

B. JENKS.

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T H E

P R E F A C E

TIS a new sort of Undertaking, in which I am now engaging: Where should I make such a Wish as the Apostle did, 1 Cor. II. 1. To be born with, for that which he call'd his Folly; I might expect the Petition to meet with nothing but Derision; from some, that will blame the Acrimony, and some, perhaps, the Flattery of my Style: while others may censure the whole of my Managing, but for a sort of Trimming. Yet I am in small care for Answers to any such Objectors.

But to them that Ask, What? Shall we search a Dunghil for Pearls? Go to Rome, and learn Devotion at the sink of Superstition? Take the Champion of Antichrist, for the Tutor of Christians, and expect Belzebub to cast out Devils? I reply, 'Tis wonderful indeed, for a Corrupt Tree to bring forth good Fruit

Fruit : Yet, if the Father of Lyes do ever speak Truth, Then give him his due ; and do not reject God's holy Word, because it comes out of the sorry Balaam's Mouth: Nor serve the Babylonians as they have done the Hereticks, To paint 'em out (among their credulous Creatures) for such Monsters as ha'nt so much as Human Shape.

In those Practical matters of Morality and Piety, where's a general Agreement among all sorts of Christians, even the widest Dissenters may shake hands together : And they that are elsewhere never so much Out, yet here, may be in the Right. Yea, the greater Wits, when they bend their Forces Heavenward, may do the bigger Service ; To Build up, what otherwise they do but Demolish. And so, This small Tract, together with that of the Mind's Ascent to GOD, which the acute Author favour'd as his Benjamin, the child not only of his old Age, but of his right Hand, and counted it (with Reason enough,) more useful than all his former works, may prove some Antidote against the Poyson of the rest ; as much to Help, as those to Hurt.

Especially, if we observe, (what he intimates,) where it was penn'd. For it seems, 'Twas not in Babylon, that he had the Visions of Zion : Not in the great City, Mother of Harlots and Abominations, where her servile

vile Brood are dazzed with the Purple, and drunk with the Cup of her Fornications; Till fit for little, but the nauseous Crambe of their endless Masses, flourish'd off with some Theatric Scenes and gaudy Apparade, To make 'em cry up the great Diana. But when got out of this Resort, in the time of his Retreat, Going forth into the Fields, and Lodging in the Villages, Cant. 7. 11. The Countrey might prove a Dame to Instruct him better than all the Virtuosi of the Town, together with the Erratic Lights of the Conclave. For in this Recess, the Christian got so far above the Circumventor, and the Scholar prov'd so much too hard for the Sophister, That he who long had troubled the World with his captious Disputations, came to make some Recompence with his pious Meditations. (O si sic Omnia!) As he is said to part with the arrogant Doctrine of Merit on his Death-bed, So dropt he many other wild Whims of an Apostate Church in his rural Sequestration, and the Contemplation of such a Church Above, as could not chuse, indeed, but put all those Absurdities to the utmost Confusion. For I find but few touches of the old Legend, fond Superstition or Papal Corruption, in the piece now under consideration. And as for those remaining Fibres, I have done him the friendly Office of Amputation; To prevent here the Propagation of any such spurious Race.

His

His plain Latin I have render'd in plain English; But turn'd some of his Words (I think,) into a truer Sense; and here and there, added also a few of my Own, to carry it somewhat farther, if not to signify somewhat better, than might be meant by the Author. Where he is Out, I take caution, to secure the Reader, as well as to stand on my own Guard. But as far as he goes Right, I decline not his Company, for the Slips, whereof I see him guilty: But am the better pleas'd, to find one here so far with me, that elsewhere is so much against me. For among all the Diversities of Opinion, None, sure, can be Serious in any Way, which deserves the Name of Religion, but his great End must be Salvation, and his main Care, for Acquisition. Now here, Even the Testimony of an Adversary, (to them that Believe and know the Truth,) gives so much Satisfaction, as adds still farther Confirmation.

But if some stand amaz'd, and others be Offended, To see the Anti-papist promote any Writings of so great a Stickler for the Papal Interest, I shall not Labour much, to Justify my Act from Precedent, and the Example of such Eminent Divines in this Church, and zealous Defenders of its Faith against that of Rome, as have done, and to this day are doing the Like. For, I think it needs no Apology,

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gy, to own our Christianity, in whatever Hand we find it. And as far as Rome is Christian, and their Religion Scriptural, it's our own. The Apostles Creed the same with them as with us : And in this last Article, (which is the present Subject,) I know no difference.

But, that we cannot swallow all the new-coin'd Articles superadded in their Trent-Creed, We despise the Brutum Fulmen of their Anathema ; and (for such their Supplements) warn 'em, from Rev. 22. 18. To take heed of a Curse that's truly dreadful. The pure Matron, Rev. 12. 1. That Woman, cloathed with the Sun, and Treading upon the Moon, We own for our Mother. But where they have given foul Scandal, in attempting to make her a Harlot ; on whom to beget that Illegitimate breed of their notorious Innovations, Tyrannical Impositions, Foppish Superstitions, and Idolatrous Abominations, we Leave her (so Debauch'd,) to themselves, and will be none of her Sons:

And as far as this Author has been an Advocate in any such Cause, I renounce him and all his Works ; and know not, whether any other could ever entertain a Prejudice deeper than my own against him.

Yet this notwithstanding, So was I surprized and pleas'd with the perusal of his Discourse concerning the Mind's Ascention to GOD, that I resolv'd to make also many of my Friends, and all common Readers, share with me in that Satisfaction; by helping him so to Speak, as every one among us Understands: But my Design in that being Anticipated, and notice given me, that I was Prevented, I laid aside what I had so prepar'd: That I might not be Injurious to a more worthy Translator, nor trouble the Publick with a second Service of that, which was already done much better.

But this little Manual, since falling into my Hands, and no less than the other suiting with my Taſt; Yea, (I muſt needs own,) ſweetly ſurprizing my Mind, with the great Variety of fine Entertainments here prepar'd, in a peculiar Affecting manner; I ſoon renewed the ſame Intention, to recompence that Fruſtration, in giving my ſelf this pleaſing Office of the like Nature; where I cannot Learn, that any one elſe (in almoſt a Hundred Years now ſince it was Wrote,) has gone before me.

And I am not aſham'd to own, That the Motive of my Translating is much the ſame, as the Author tells us, his was for the Writing: Which in the Preliminaries to his Book, he gives to the purpoſe following.

Out

(Out of the Dedication and Proem.)

SO great and deplorable is the human Frailty,
and Propension to these Inferior things,
That unless the Mind of man be Rowz'd, and
raised out of the dust and dirt of the Earth,
to engage in the Meditation of things Above,
Even Religious Hearts are here in danger to be
Mir'd and Lost.

'Tis therefore no small Favour wherewith
they oblige us, who bestow their pains even all
manner of ways, in Admonishing and Quic-
kening us, to Look up, and Quarrey at Higher
and better Fruitions, than any are here to be
found. For by such means, our Hearts come to be
Purged, and our Soul's Palate Rectify'd; Till
the Inner-man begin to discern the true Beauty,
and to Relish the genuine Sweetness. And
thus, by degrees, the Glory of the World is
Tarnish'd in our Eyes, and the Pleasures of
the Flesh grow Insipid to our Taste; whereupon
an Entrance is ministred to us abundantly
into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. I. II.

Now this abundant Ministration we may
suppose to be made, by various Considerations
opening

opening divers Avenues before us, for our Admittance into that House not made with hands, Eternal in theHeavens: Which holy Scripture calls also a City on High, and the Kingdom of Heaven. And here we have Twelve several Considerations propos'd, as so many Ways, Leading to that everlasting Bliss. To Traverse which paths in serious Thoughts, may give the contemplative Christian no less Delight to his Mind, than Advance to his Soul: Nor only set before him an inviting Prospect by the Way, but also contribute much to speed him on to the joyful End.

And in this melancholy Vale of Mortality, where we poor sons of Adam are now groaning, as uneasy Exiles, after our better Heavenly Country, Those holy Scriptures, which are the consolatory Letters from our Father above, do use Four very significative Appellations, of a Paradise, a House, a City, and a Kingdom; To Notify, and also Recommend the Goods of that Glorious Seat. A Paradise, as the sweetest Place, flowing with all sorts of the best Delights. A House, or royal Palace, with all stately Apartments, and the richest Furniture. A City, consisting of many Houses, Gardens, noble Piles, and fair Retreats. And a Kingdom of widest Extent, To contain a multitude of Towns and Cities, Mountains and Vales, Groves and Waters, Fields and Plains, in the greatest Plenty, and most entertaining Variety.

But

The Preface.

XIX

But because, in a vast Kingdom replenish'd with innumerable Inhabitants, they may never have the opportunity to See or Know one another ; and many Thousands there are, concerning whom you cannot so much as tell, whether there be any such Persons in the World; yet no doubt but the Blessed above do all See and Know one another, and Converse as the most familiar Friends together ; Therefore, to the Title of a Kingdom is added that of a City. And as ample as ever Heaven is, all the Saints dwell there as Fellow-Citizens , sweetly united together. Yea, not only as Citizens, but Domesticks, of the same Household of God. Therefore , what's in one place call'd a City , elsewhere goes under the name of a House. And because they Live all there in the highest Raptures of Delight ; Therefore, to all the other Terms is added that of a Paradise : Where are no Void, Wast, or unagreeable Places ; but every thing with utmost Pleasure to entertain and Regale the Sense. A Kingdom then it is, because so Spacious ; A City, because so Compact ; A House, for close Conversation ; And a Paradise, for all manner of pleasurable Diversion, and the sweetest Satisfaction.

ER

ERRATA.

- P**age 38. Line 8. *for so read to.*
 49. 4. *for must r. may't.*
 72. 10. *for when read where.*
 77. 21. *for even read ever.*
 78. 13. *for Imigation read Irrigation.*
 92. 4. *for Loath read Loaths.*
 137. 15. *for who read whom.*
 165. 23. *for starting r. startling.*
 176. 9. *read his.*
 180. *antepenult. r. forth.*
 221. 5. *for First r. Fifth.*
 234. 6. *for 1 Cor. 12. 3. r. 2 Cor. 12. 4.*
 Ibid. 8. *for ἀπ'ητα r. ἀπρητα.*

Page 123. from Line 14. to the bottom of the Page, the inverted Comma's before the Lines (which denote somewhat added to the Author's Copy,) are wanting; and a few more, in some other Pages.

I

The First B o o k
Of the Saints Eternal Felicity,
under the Title of
G O D's K I N G D O M.

C H A P. I.

Of the Amplitude of God's Kingdom.



What mighty Importance is the Doctrine concerning the *Kingdom of Heaven*, we may learn from our Heavenly Master's so much insisting upon it, in his first Preaching; in almost all his *Parables*; and in his Forty days Conversation with his Disciples after his Resurrection: When, it's said, *Acts* I. 3. He *Appear'd to 'em, Speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.*

We don't pretend here, to Explicate every thing that concerns this Kingdom: but only such Particulars as may serve to
B Describe

Describe the *Place* and the *State* of the Blessed. And first of all, Why it is called the *Kingdom of God*. Which may be, 'For
' the *Amplitude* of its Extent ; For the *Mul-*
' *titude* of its Inhabitants ; For the *Form* of
' its Government ; For the *Royal* Quality
' of all its Subjects ; and for their Enjoy-
' ment of all the *Goods* that a Kingdom can
' afford.

I. It is called the *Kingdom of God*, For the *Amplitude* of its Extent : Because it is the most Spacious Region, and of such Wonderful *Dimensions*, as are Wider than the Narrowness of Humane thought can tell how to comprehend. The Orb of this *Earth*, which is no more than a mere *Point*, compar'd with the highest Heavens, ' (and
' tho' it were a Luminous Body all over as
' bright as the Sun, 'twould be too Little to be
' discerned at all from the Starry Firmament,) Yet does it contain so many and mighty Kingdoms, as 'tis not easy to reckon up ;
' but much harder to be acquainted with ;
' Tho' a man should study nothing else,
' even all the days of his Life. O then, of what unknown infinite Extent is that Kingdom, which is but One, and yet *Di-*
lates and spreads it self thro' all the uncon-
ceivable Space and Latitude of the Heaven
of Heavens ! Nor does it take in only the
Supra-celestial Regions, but all the *Univer-*
sity of things every where. The *Empyra-*
um,

um, indeed, which in a peculiar manner bears the Name of Heaven, is the chief Province, in which do Reside those Princes of the first *Rank*, who are all of 'em Sons of God, and Heirs of Glory.

Next is the *Aether*, or Firmament ; in which the Stars do *Glitter*, and (as if they had a *Spirit* of Life,) exactly Move, at the great Creator's beck.

The *Third* is the *Air*, where Wind and Vapour, Clouds charg'd with Rain and Thunder, and also the Fowls of all various kinds have the Liberty to *Expatiate*.

The *Fourth* is the Watery Region ; including Fountains and Rivers, Lakes and Seas; and whatever glides thro' those deep and secret *Caverns*.

The *Fifth* is this *Terrestrial* Globe, where dwell the Inhabitants that might be tempted to Vye ev'n with the Heavenly Host, for the Privilege of their Reason, and their Dominion over all the other Creatures here; but that their Mortality is a *Diminution*, which smartly convinces 'em of their *Inferiority*.

The *Last* and Lowest Region, unspeakably more disconsolate than any Desert *Arabia*, not only void of all good Fruits, but full of insupportable Plagues, holds none but such *Reprobate* Spirits, whose Aspiring so high, threw 'em so Low : And all whom they seduce, to Conspire in their

Rebellion, will bear the sad Share in their Condemnation.

But all these strange *Provinces* are the ample Dominions of our *Heavenly King*; and but several *Districts* of that boundless Kingdom, which he will communicate to them that Love him.

Here then, *Christian Soul*, Enlarge thy Heart, and suffer not thy self to be cribb'd up in the narrow Limits of present things. Never Pant and Tire out thy self, to compass a Pitiful *Particle* of that which we call the *World*; when thou may'st Inherit *All*, if thou wilt. O would Mortal Men but Engage in earnest to seek this Kingdom of God, or but apply their Minds, with any Seriousness, to *Think* of it, They could not but be under the greatest Confusion, to go take up Arms, and engage in bloody Wars, for some poor despicable *Scraps* of the Earth. Consider it, Man, when God offers thee even a *Co-partnership* in his infinite eternal Kingdom, Wilt thou madly run into Rapine, and Slaughter, and innumerable Enormities, only for the Acquisition and possession of a little *Town*? O where's thy Understanding then, where's thy Counsel? *Why don't ye rather take Wrong, and suffer your selves to be Defrauded?* asks the Apostle, 1 Cor. 6. 7. It cannot be, that he who goes indeed with a Careful heart, to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven, should ever use such
Vio-

Violence, and engage in such Wickedness, only for a spot of *Clay* ; but will certainly find some *Umpire* or other to Compromise the Matter ; or rather let all go, than hazard the Loss of Heaven, to be Master of such a contemptible *Trifle* upon Earth.

C H A P. II.

Of the Multitudes that people the Kingdom of God.

IN the *Second* place, Well may that High and Lofty Habitation above be called the *Kingdom of God*, For the wonderful Frequency and Variety of its *Inhabitants* : Such as no House or City, but the widest Kingdom can ever contain. We are told of *Thousands of Thousands*, and the *innumerable Company of Angels*. To which add all the *Spirits of the Just that die in the Lord*, from righteous *Abel*, quite down to the *Consummation* of all things ; together with every one of their Bodies also, which shall be raised Glorious, to shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father : And what Imagination then is able to reach any worthy *Idea* of such an innumerable Assembly ?

' Not to dogmatize of what's above our
 ' reach to determine, Whether there be
 ' *Nine Orders of Angels*; *Seraphims*, that
 flame with ardent Love; *Cherubims*, that
 shine with brightest Wisdom; *Thrones*, that
 acquiesce with unspeakable Joy in the *Tran-*
quility of Contemplation; *Dominions*, that,
 as the Ministers of the most High, Govern
 this Lower World; *Virtues*, who at the
 Command of the Almighty Lord, work
Signs and *Wonders*; *Powers*, who Over-
 rule the *Aerial Powers* of unclean Spirits;
Principalities, who Preside over the Kings
 and Princes of the Earth; *Arch-Angels*,
 who are the *Co-adjutors* and *Helpers* of
 Church-Rulers; or lastly, *Angels*, that are
 the Guardians and Keepers of particular
 Persons all over this World. ' Without In-
 ' truding into those things which we have
 ' not seen, nor can see, It may suffice us
 ' to conceive of the several Names of those
 ' Holy and Happy Courtiers of Heaven,
 ' as so many *Ensigns* and Images of the
 ' Glory and Greatness of God: ' The *Se-*
raphims representing his boundless Love,
 whence Angels, Men, and all the World
 sprang. The *Cherubims*, as in a Glass, shew-
 ing his unsearchable *Wisdom*, who made
 all things so exact, in Number, Weight,
 and Measure. The *Thrones*, demonstrating
 his perfect *Rest*, who in Moving all things,
 is never Moved; and in Ruling all things,
 never

never Disturbed. The *Dominions*, setting forth his universal *Lordship*, to Preserve or Destroy, and do every thing as he pleaseth. The *Virtues*, pointing to him, as the God that alone does *Wonders*, and reserves to himself the liberty of renewing and multiplying Signs and *Prodigies*. The *Powers*, in their Name speaking his *Omnipotence*, to whom nothing is Impossible or hard, that ever he has a Mind to do. The *Principalities*, significant of his Reigning, as the true Prince of the Kings of the Earth; *King of Kings*, *Lord of Lords*. The *Arch-Angels* shadowing him out, as the true and chief *President* o're all the Churches. And the *Angels*, his Emblems, as Father of Orphans and the great Preserver of every Individual in Particular; Who, tho' he give his *Angels charge over 'em*, Yet himself is still Present with 'em, to Protect and Keep 'em.

Now, after this innumerable Company of *Angels*, that help to replenish the Kingdom of God, we have another piece of impossible *Arithmetic*, To give any List of his Saints, that people the same Kingdom: Being such a Confluence and great Multitude, *which no Man can number, of all Nations, and Kindred, and People, and Tongues, standing before the Throne of God, and before the Lamb; cloathed with Robes, and Palms in their hands.* Rev. 7. 9.

B.4

Among

‘ Among these, I doubt not but *Prophets*
 ‘ and *Apostles*, *Martyrs* and *Confessors* will
 ‘ have an Eminence more than ordinary,
 ‘ and be distinguish’d by some peculiar
 ‘ Marks of Glory. But to make ’em up
 ‘ *Nine Orders* of Saints, as well as so ma-
 ‘ ny of the Angelic *Hierarchy*, I look upon
 ‘ the Enumeration as too Unscriptural, as
 ‘ well as Partial, To take in only Pastors
 ‘ and Teachers, Priests and Levites, Monks
 ‘ and Hermits : Because, no doubt, but as
 ‘ good Saints may be found of other Names
 ‘ and Ranks. Yet here, the Charity of
 ‘ *Rome* forgot to leave any Place for Prince
 ‘ or People, High or Low, *Rich* or *Poor*,
 ‘ in the List ; If they be of the *Laity*, They
 ‘ are hardly to be *Canoniz’d*, or admitted ;
 ‘ be they never so *Holy*.

‘ But be these Orders and Degrees among
 ‘ the Heavenly Host more or fewer, the
 ‘ Number of *Individuals* will be never the
 ‘ Lesser ; To give an Amazing as well
 as Rejoicing Spectacle ; with which is ne-
 ver to be named that of *Solomon*, whom a
Queen came so far to Visit : Much less that
 of *Anthony*, so fam’d for his Sanctity, that
 (we are told) not only Men in Troops
 crowded to him, but Kings and Emperors
 courted his Friendship. And they that have
 Travel’d far to behold the Rarities of o-
 ther Countries, and divert themselves among
 strange People ; Or have cross’d Seas, as
 well

well as Lands, to see such Persons themselves, of whom they have read or heard so much from others, Never found they any thing to recompense their Pains, or to gratify their Curiosity, comparable to the most Ravishing Entertainment, of seeing that most Numerous, *August*, and Glorious Assembly in the Kingdom of God ; Yea, not only to Look upon 'em, but Converse with 'em, even as some of 'em ; in a way of the dearest Friendship, and sweet Participation of all their most Happy Condition.

Who would not be for Traveling many a Mile, and count it a Journey of Pleasure, hasting away with Longing desire, and big with joyful Expectation, were it but to see one Glorious *Angel* from Heaven, offering himself to open View, in all his amiable Splendor here on Earth ? O then, what is it, (at one Prospect) to Behold 'em All ; even the whole Host in Heaven ! One Prophet or Apostle descending from thence, and shewing himself here among us would give a singular Transport of delight : What then will it be, To feast our Eyes, and charm our Ears, In Seeing, and Hearing and Enjoying 'em all together ? If one *Sun* cheers the whole Earth ; what Wonders will innumerable Suns, Living, Understanding, Triumphant *Suns* produce in the Kingdom of Heaven ? So Relishing to me is

the Conversation with Angels and such a sort of Men, where never a one is a Fool, or tainted with any manner of Fault, but all of 'em exquisitely Wise and Good; That this alone should I esteem such a Happiness, as for the sake of which, I would verily willingly want all the most delicious Gratifications of this present Life.

C H A P. III.

Of the Monarchical Form of God's Kingdom.

TH E next Reason why the Blessed State is called a Kingdom may be, Because in Heaven alone is found the perfect *Model* of Reigning: Where 'tis not like a *Republick*, in the Hands of Many, either Peers or People; but of one Sole and Supream *Monarch*. And this, upon Earth, in good truth and propriety, is not to be found. Tho' here, I grant, a King may Command without the Counsel or Consent of others; yet *Execute* his Commands he cannot, unless his Subjects Please. Neither dare he so much as Command, If Terrify'd with a multitude of Mutinous people. For how many Kings and Emperors, (by their own Armies) have been
Depriv'd

Depriv'd if not Slaughter'd? How vain then is the Supream Power, that's boasted in mortal Kings, who cannot do what they would, without their Subjects Leave?

But the Power of the Supream King depends upon none, but his own pure Will. And who can Resist *Omnipotence*, that wants neither Soldiers or Arms, nor any thing at all out of Himself? And whenever he uses the Ministry of Men or Angels, or any other Creatures, 'Tis only because he *will*; Not that he cannot Execute whatever he pleases, as easy without 'em. For he, that without any Partner, *Coadjutor*, or Minister, made Heaven and Earth, and all that is in 'em, with his bare Word, and Keeps 'em up by his mere Will, Can he not as easily Rule and Administer all by his sole Controul?

Nor does God alone truly Reign, only because the Supream Power, but also the Supream Art of Reigning is lodg'd in none but in Himself. Neither does he ever need any Senate or Council; *Isa. 40. 13. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; or being his Counsellor, has taught him?* He is the only Potentate: Not only Terrible to the Kings of the Earth; but Great above all Gods; i. e. Idols and *Dæmons*; or the *quasi*-Gods, that are set up only by Participation from him; such as Men and Angels, whom he has all entirely subject to his Empire. As the proud

proud *Nebuchadnezzar*, after he had been Tutor'd by the punishment of his Arrogance, came humbly to acknowledge, Dan. 4. 34. and 5. *My Understanding returned to me, and I blessed the most High, and praised and honour'd him that Liveth for ever and ever; whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation. And all the Inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doth according to his Will in the army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the earth. And none can stay his hand, or say to him, What do'st thou? Here's one, who being first Himself taught (as with Bryars and Thorns) may teach all the biggest in the World, to Humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Yea, and to take more pleasure, submissively to serve the King of Kings, and gain his blessed Favour, than ever haughtily to Arrogate to themselves, and Resist his Will; and so, come to feel the weight of his intolerable Wrath.*

CHAP. IV.

Shewing that all the Blessed are Kings.

THE *Fourth* and chief Reason why the Place and State of the Blessed goes

goes under the Name of a *Kingdom*, is because in Heaven they are all of 'em *Kings*. Tho' there they serve the Lord, yet so it is, that they Live and Reign in Royal State and Kingly Height themselves. As the same persons may be both Servants, and Sons; So may they be *Servants and Kings*. Servants they must needs be, who are Made of God, and still owe him Duty and Obedience, to whom they ever owe their Being and Life and All. And yet they are *Sons* too; Because *Born of God*; And also *Kings*, Because that Royal degree and Dignity is communicated to 'em by the King of Kings.

Kings of the *Earth* (you'll say) they may be; (whom the *Psalmist* cautions to be so *wise*, as to *serve the Lord with Fear, and Rejoyce with Trembling*, Psal. 2. 10, 11.) But who can conceive or Believe, that any can be Servants, and yet *Kings* of the *Heavenly Kingdom*? Whether it gain Belief or not, This we have upon no less Credit, than that of God's own *Word*; Mat. 5. 3. *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit; for their's is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Mat. 25. 34. *Come ye Blessed Children of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom.* And Rev. 3. 21. *To him that Overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my Throne.* Here's the Promise made, yea, Possession, and also *Entronement* given. And what can all this signify less than a
Participation

Participation of the Royalty, Power, Wealth, Honour, and other Goods of the Heavenly Kingdom? *If we Suffer, we shall also Reign with our Lord.* 2 Tim. 2. 12. Yea, even such as may seem to stand most Remote from it, and not at all likely for it, (the very *Poor of this World*;) *God has chosen to be Heirs of the Kingdom, which he has prepared for them that Love him.* Jam. 2. 12.

Nor is this Kingdom at all Diminished, because so *Participated*, even by the Innumerable company, that are made so Blessed. For 'tis nothing like the poor Earthly Kingdoms here, that will not abide such *Partition*, without Diminution and Consumption. But the Kingdom of Heaven is whole to All, and whole to every One. Even as the *Sun* is seen wholly by each particular Person; and it Enlightens and Warms every one individually and singly, as much as All together; and as if no other enjoyed the same Benefit. This will be easier understood, when the *Goods* of the Heavenly Kingdom come to be explained. But *first*, the conditions and *Qualifications* of these Kings are to be considered, That none may call in question the validity of this Reason, why all the Blessed should *be so called*.

The two main *Qualifications* requisite in Kings are *Wisdom* and *Justice*. With the *Wisdom* holy Scripture joins *Prudence*,
Coun-

Counsel, and all those Accomplishments that pertain to the *Understanding*; and with the *Justice*, Clemency, and the rest of those Virtues that adorn and perfect the *Will*. Now in the Wisdom, 'tis required, that he who Reigns, should know how to Rule well, and in the Justice, that his Heart be set upon it.

So, when *Solomon*, in the Beginning of his Reign, was allowed of God, to Ask even what he would, He desir'd Wisdom; as the Chief of those good Accomplishments requisite in Kings. And the Petition so pleased God, that he answer'd him in the wishes of his heart. Had he so well bethought himself, as also to ask *Righteousness*; It might have secur'd him from falling as he did, into so scandalous Wickedness. His Father pray'd better for him, *Psal. 72. 1. Give the King thy Judgments, O God, and thy Righteousness to the King's Sen.* For tho' Righteousness cannot be without Wisdom; Yet there may be a sort of *Wisdom* separate from Righteousness. But both of these are ever *conjunct* in the Blessed above. Tho' many of the Saints were Weak and *Illiterate* here on Earth; yet in Heaven they Commence *Illuminati* on a sudden, To See All in Him, who is the *First Cause of all*: and presently they exceed even *Solomon* in Wisdom, as well as Glory. There they see not *darkly*, but *Face to Face*; and Know, not in Part, but

as they are known, 1 Cor. 13. 12. And tho' here, they had the *Alloy* of many Frailties hanging upon 'em, to sadden 'em; Yet above, all that's *Imperfect* is done away: And as to any manner of Sinning, They neither will nor ever can be further so Concerned. Still beholding the pure infinite Good, They can neither Divert from it, nor chuse but most ardently to Love it. And their Love being, in the utmost sense, made *Perfect*, their *Righteousness* also is Compleat. And when so accomplisht in Wisdom and Goodness, they are every way fitted to Rise so High, and Reign for ever.

Rouze then, *Christian*, and with thy Mind, Ascend as high as possible. Be-think thyself what a Good is this, To *Reign with God*! Mount upon the Wings of Contemplation, to pierce the very Heavens; and behold the high *Throne*, in which our blessed Lord and Saviour has promised the Saints to sit, even with *Himself*. Think if thou canst, how *Superlative* will be that Glory, To be so Seated before a multitude of Angels, and proclaim'd a *Conqueror* over the World; And how transporting will be the Gladness, To have a total and Eternal Discharge from all manner of Labour and Danger. O how cheerfully may they now *Work*, and also *Suffer* for Christ, who foresee by Faith, How they shall Rise and also Reign with him?
And

And what can further be Desired, but to Participate of all his *Goods*? which is next to be considered.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Goods of God's Kingdom.

THE *last* Reason, why the Saints Bliss in Heaven is set forth under this Notion of a *Kingdom*, is because there they are Happy in the Enjoyment of all the *Goods* that a Kingdom can afford. Now, we will look upon these Goods of the Heavenly Kingdom, as bearing some Resemblance to the Goods of an Earthly Kingdom: 'Only so much Greater and Better, 'as Heaven excells the Earth. And this 'will give such a *Turn* to the Balance, as to 'shew us even an *infinite* Disproportion.' What's prepared then for the Blessed, is not called only a *Kingdom*, but the Kingdom of *Heaven*: That we may suppose such a proportion of Goods to Goods, as there is of *Earth* to *Heaven*; i. e. of a Narrow, Low, Sorry, Temporary matter, to the Acquisition that is most Large, and High, and Rich, and Noble, and (which is more than all the rest,) Everlasting.

Now,

Now, in Reck'ning up the Goods of an Earthly Kingdom, we use to count *Power, Honour, Wealth and Pleasure*. For an earthly King can command his subjects; and if they Obey not, can Punish 'em, in their Purfes, with Fines and Loss of Goods; or in their Bodies, with Bonds, Stripes, Banishment, or Death. Therefore are such Kings dreaded by the People, even as if they were Gods.

Again, Kings will be *Honoured* by their Subjects even with a Veneration, that seems above the Nature of man to receive; with bended Knees, and prostrate Bodies; with the greatest Distance, and a profound Observance.

Further, They must have mighty *Treasuries*, and perpetual *Incomes*: And they use not to compute their Revenues, by a Hundred or a Thousand pieces of Silver or Gold: but by Thousands of Thousands. And not without good Reason. When 'tis not Ten or Twenty Servants only that they have to Maintain; but Guards and Troops, numerous Armies, and mighty Forces.

Once more, They'll seldom vouchsafe to Recreate their Minds with *common* Diversions, and such as should seem to throw 'em upon a Level with their Subjects: But count it necessary for the Splendor of their Majesty, to Throw away Thousands upon Vanity and Luxury, upon splendid Courts,
and

and pompous Trains, upon Favourites and Parasites, Banquets and Palaces, Walks and Gardens, Parks and Chases, Canals and Fountains, Musick and Theatres, Aviaries and Viridaries, Statues and Monuments; ' with such like expensive *Superfluities*, (if ' not Follies and Vices also,) which they ' call Magnificence.

Such are the Goods of earthly Princes , which yet have all of 'em, that common *Appendage*, That they are Flashy and *Transitory* ; and at most but beginning with their Birth, and Expiring with their Life. Yea, sometime the Life is extended beyond the Reign: and how often do they *survive* all that high Satisfaction, in which they so much applauded themselves ?

Neither are these, even while they last, any *Pure Goods* : But their *Power* is check'd with many Bars , that they cannot get over. Their *Honour* is clouded with one and another's bold Reflection. All their Wealth cannot answer some Necessities. And the most of their Joys may still be dash'd with some embittering Circumstances. ' Yea, all these do need a great deal ' of *Artifice*, Flourish, and Fallacy, to set 'em off, for such Superlative Goods, as ' the Possessors never find 'em : Their Senses being *Receptive* of no more Pleasure, ' than the Senses of ordinary men ; that ' which remains to Compensate for all the ' Cumber

' Cumber and Burden upon 'em, seems to
' be only the *Imagination* and Conceit of
' a mighty *Somewhat*, they know not what.

Such is the King's *Power*, that the People, it's true, depend upon his Pleasure : But then, here's a Crevise to peep into his Weakness, That the King also depends upon the *Arms* and Strength of his People. For his *Nod* will not avail, if they hold their *Hands*. Yea, while they Depend upon *One*, He Depends upon *Many*. He can Vex and Harrafs them ; But they can *Depose* and Ruin him : As often has been the tragical *Exit*, not only of Tyrannical and flagitious, but of Gracious and Excellent Princes.

Next, for their *Honour*, Princes are *Rever'd* while present, and before others ; But when distant, or out of Sight, even their seeming Admirers may not Spare 'em ; but make as bold as they please with 'em. Yea, some can flatter 'em with the Tongue, who scorn 'em in their Hearts. And here, could they go to the *Poll*, they might find many more that Despise, than Applaud 'em ; and in a just Computation, Their Glory may not be large enough to cover their Infamy. Those that attend the Throne are but a few : when the many who Live *Remote*, take their Liberty to Carp. One Censures this, another Criminates that ; and the most have their *Arrows* here to shoot. But

But the *Riches* peradventure so abound with Kings, that they never know any thing like *Want*, having all at Command? Alas, how frequently may you see the contrary? And who use to be more *Needy*? They have (it's true,) mighty *Incomes* and *Funds*: And ha'nt they sometimes as great *Debts* and *Streights*? Now, he is not the only *Poor* man that has very *Little*, But he also that *Craves* and *needs* a great deal. And does not this look like an argument of *Poverty*, when the Prince is fain to ask Pence even of the *Poor*; and lay a *Tax* that must be gather'd of some, who have scarce to buy the *Meat* and *Drink* that should keep 'em *Alive*?

Not that I would upbraid Kings with the *Tribute* which they require; and which holy Scripture, yea, and all Justice in the World makes their *Due*: That they who undergo the heavy *Fatigue*, should also have the mighty *Support*. Rom. 13. 6. *For this cause pay you Tribute also: For they are God's Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.* But I only make this Remark upon the Imperfection of earthly Kings, That they are under such a *Necessity*, as to *Collect* and gather *Supplies*, even of the *Needy*.

But what shall we say to their *Privileges* and their *Delights*? They have (it's true,) their sumptuous *Palaces*, their noble *Apartment*s,

ments, Royal Equipage, precious Furniture, delicate Tables, gay Theatres, Variety of sweet Retreats and Diversions. But have they not also their Distempers and Aches, Gouts and Cholicks, Stone and Strangury; Yea, many Ailments more than are incident to meaner persons? The *Care* of their Kingdoms, and the *Danger* of their Enemies; and oftentimes the News of some great Losses, or grievous *Disasters*, is a Burthen hanging so hard and heavy upon 'em, as to keep 'em whole Nights *Awake*, and in *Pain*; when Meaner Persons are Sleeping sweet and secure. The Suspicion of *Plots*, the fear of *Revolts*, 'The Jeopardy not only of their *Crowns*, but their *Lives*, and much more of their *Souls*; If so be, that their greater *Pleasures* make 'em only the grearer Sinners; and the continual Solicitude and concern for their future *Accounts*, which, in weight, will bear proportion to their *Trust*; All these help to mingle such *Trouble* with their *Ease*, and such *Griefs* with their *Joys*; as may serve not only to Cure the *Envy*, but to draw out the *Pity* of their Subjects: When, upon such Considerations, many Kings have *Abdicated* their *Crowns*, and out-run their *Thrones*; To seek more *Quiet* and *Comfort* in the Solitude of some Hiding place, where they might Live an *Easy*, as well as Private Life.

But

But O how different from all this is the Heavenly Kingdom, where all that Live Blessed with God, have Power without *Checks*, Honour without *Slur*, Wealth without *Want*, and Pleasure without any *Pain*? Where *no Evil shall befall 'em*, nor any *Plague come nigh their Dwelling*? But God shall wipe away all *Tears from their Eyes*, and banish all *Grief from their Hearts*; and there shall be no more *Death*, neither *sorrow nor Crying*, neither any more *Pain*. Rev. 21. 4.

So great also is the Power of these Heavenly Kings, that they can do whatever they Will; So high their *Honour*, that all, even *Wicked Men*, and *Devils*, who *Despis'd 'em*, shall *Admire 'em*: And compared with that Honour of God's Saints, all this World's *Glory* is but a wretched piece of childish *Pageantry*.

What shall I say, what can I say enough, of their Wealth? O how *Rich* will they be, to whom God himself shall be All in All! Rich are they in the highest measure that need *Nothing*, and never *Desire* any more than they have. For 'tis not the *Coffer*, but the *Mind* of the Possessor, that indeed makes him Rich. And the Saints above have every thing to their *Minds*. All that Heaven and Earth have they shall have. For *all things are theirs*, 1 Cor. 3. 21. They shall *Inherit all things*, Rev. 21. 7. And what can they ever Want, who are the
the

the Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ; and reach'd to the perfect Center of their everlasting Rest?

But their *Pleasure*, What Tongue can utter? What Heart can Conceive? So Pure, so *defecate*, so Full, so every way Exquisite and Compleat; that even they who shall for ever Enjoy it, can never, as it deserves, Express it. Yet this will come further to be discours'd, under the Notion of *Paradise*. Thus the *Goods* which shall be found in common to all the Blessed in Heaven, are of such a Nature and Excellence, that none ever to be found upon Earth are any way meet ever to come here in the *Scale* of Comparison.

CHAP. VI.

What great Account men make of Earthly Kingdoms, and how much more they ought to Value the Heavenly.

LET us now observe a little, with what *Ardour* and Vehemence men use to Covet and thirst after the Kingdoms upon *Earth*: Tho' they be so Narrow and Tottering, so full of Cares, of Dangers and Troubles, (as you have heard:) That from such notorious Folly, we may grow

grow so *Considerate*, as to get better Instructed in our duty ; and learn to shew (at least) as much *Concern*, if not a great deal more fervent *Longing*, for the Kingdom that's Heavenly and Everlasting.

The Ambition of *Reigning* seems to exceed all the hot *Pursuits* of whatever things else Men are hunting after all the World over. For a *Kingdom* is not barely one particular Good ; but an *Aggregate* that comprizes all the rest, in *Quest* of which this World is so very Keen and eager. Even, the Power, the Honour, the Wealth, the Pleasure, (as aforesaid,) and also that dear *Liberty* of Living *at Will*, without Controul, which not only Men, but even the Brutes, so extremely do covet.

There's the Excellency, and some Semblance of *Divinity*, which gives Kings such a Superiority, that they have no *Peers* ; but sit above all, Out-shine all, and are Admired, and even Adored by all. Hence, the promise of a *King*, when he would be most Obliging, (as *Abashuerus* to *Esther*, and *Herod* to his *Herodias*,) is to give half his *Kingdom*. Hence, the Getting or Enlarging of *Empire*, goes for Reason sufficient to Vacate Laws, and Violate all that is Sacred. Thus *Ninus*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Maximinus* the *Thracian*, and *Philip* the *Arabian*, all oppress their Friends and Neighbours ; and some of 'em ruin'd their Benefactors and Masters.

Yea, this Lust of *Reigning* has not spar'd
 nearest Kindred, Brethren, or Fathers,
 standing in the way : But many (such as
Atbalia, Romulus, Caracalla, Sinochus,) have
 presum'd it *Apology* good enough, to imbrue
 their hands in the *Blood* that was next to
 their *Own*. And when the *Astrologers*
 told *Nero's* Mother, That he should *Reign*,
 but *Kill Her* ; *Interimat, dum Imperet*, (said
 She) Let him be the *Butcher*, so that he be
 the *Emperor*. Post poning her Life to his
Rule. Thus the Religion of an *Oath*, which
 all Nations have ever esteem'd so *Inviolable*,
 as to be strictly kept, tho' pawn'd to an
Enemy ; Yet has been made *Dispensable*, when
 a Kingdom was the Temptation to break
 through it. And so, *Tully* tells us, *Cæsar*
 himself could quote *Euripides* his Verses,

*That if an Oath must suffer Force,
 Let only Empire be the Cause ;
 In all things else, better or worse,
 Adore the Gods, and keep their Laws.*

All Ages of the World have been fruit-
 ful in *Examples* to demonstrate, That no-
 thing is such a *Bait* to humane Appetite, as
 a *Kingdom*. Tho' all Experience shews us,
 That not only Kings do not *Reign* long,
 but the Kingdoms themselves have also their
Fatal Period. Only the Kingdom of the
 Saints is that which shall *Abide for ever*, and
 of

of it there shall be *no End*. *Dan. 2. 44. The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom, which shall never be Destroyed; But it shall stand for ever.* This will be fulfilled at the End of the World: When not only the greater Monarchies, but all the little Principalities too shall tumble down, and Vanish away. Only the Kingdom of Christ and his Saints is indeed *Eternal*, and of his Kingdom, there shall be *no End*, *Luke 1. 33.*

Now, if a Kingdom so Slippery and Transitory, and that which few do obtain; And when they have Got it, find a great deal of Uneasiness with it, be so excessively Lov'd, and so violently Pursu'd, and above all things Preferr'd, and thought worth the Scrambling for, and Stretching to, even through Sharps, and Wounds, and Seas of *Blood*; What's the reason that so very Few are in Love with the *Kingdom of Heaven*? And that the most are so *Oscitant* and heavy, in seeking after it? When we are assur'd from his Word, who cannot deceive us, That this blessed Kingdom is *Open* to all; and without *Effusion* of *Blood*, may (in ordinary) be obtained: And beyond all contradiction, it infinitely *Excels* the greatest, the best, the richest, the Fair-est Kingdoms of the World.

Should I bid any one Despise a Kingdom, and make choice of a small Vineyard or *Field*; who would not count me

Abſurd and Impertinent? But when I ſay, (Yea God himſelf ſays it,) Deſpiſe a poor, little, vile, perishing Kingdom; and Lay out for the Greateſt, the Richeſt, the Beſt, that's moſt *Glorious* and *Everlaſting*; which if thou wilt, thou may'ſt, (by the Grace of God,) *Aſcertain* to thy ſelf; Why then doſt thou not Rouze and apply thy ſelf with all thy *Might* to Seek it, and Win it? What thou wilt answer here, I cannot imagine; Unless it be, That the Glory of an Earthly Kingdom is before thy Eyes, and may be Felt even with thy Hands: But as for the Kingdom of Heaven, it cannot be Seen, nor Touch'd, nor ſcarce ſo much as *Conceiv'd*, even by Faith it ſelf.

Let this be granted; Yet if thou wilt but well ponder the Matter, What Weight has the Holy Scripture *Verity*, ſo Ancient, Genuine, and Awful, and (in this Matter,) ſo very Plain and Expreſs; And what a Cloud of Witneſſes (for many Ages,) we have to Confirm it; not only by Miracles, but with their Blood: Canſt thou forbear then to cry, with God's Favourite, *Pſal.* 93.
 5. *Thy Testimonies, O Lord, are very ſure.*
 'Hath the Lord paſt his Word to his Followers, *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock,*
 'It is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the
 'Kingdom? If God then hath ſpoken, I
 'will not only Believe, but Rejoice: Re-
 'joice in Hope of the Glory of God, *Rom.*
 '5. 2. 'To

‘ To make any *doubt* of it, were, indeed,
 ‘ to sink even beneath the *Heathen* ; Who
 ‘ by Nature’s Light alone, could see a *bet-*
 ‘ *ter World* beyond this. And no Man of
 ‘ Sense, but may easily infer it, even from
 ‘ the deductions of common *Reason* : Yea,
 ‘ from the very Contemplation of his own
 ‘ *Frame*, which speaks his now *Imperfect*
 ‘ State, and tells him, that he is here but
 ‘ a *Viator* and Sojourner, who cannot, in
 ‘ this Life, ever reach the blessed *End*, for
 ‘ which he was *Made* : The Desires, and
 ‘ Hopes and comfortable Expectations of
 ‘ which, do spring and flourish in all the
 ‘ *Wise*st and *Best* of Men. And we may be
 ‘ sure, That the most Righteous and Gra-
 ‘ cious God would never suffer them that
 ‘ most Admire and Love him, to be (in
 ‘ so great a matter) *Deluded* and Abu-
 ‘ sed.

Here then, The *Obscurity* is not the only
 cause, why Men are no more *Enflam’d* to
 Aspire after the Kingdom of Heaven :
 But because they are so *Taken* up with Out-
 ward things, and pull’d down with the
Pressure of common Custom ; that they
 will not allow themselves the Leisure, so
 much as to Think and Meditate of that
 which is certainly the Best for ’em, and
 most highly of all Concerns’em. They
 will not (as our Lord counsels and com-
 mands,) *Enter into the Closet* of their Heart,

and shutting the door, to keep out pernicious *Intruders*, Earnestly beg of God to be with 'em, in such a most Important business.

Would we but be Resolute here, To throw out, and lay aside the Trifling Thoughts, and Lesser cares ; and seriously *betink* our selves, What is the Kingdom of Heaven, and how easily and certainly it may be Obtained ; And what an infinite *Disparity* there is between things Temporal and Eternal ; between the Lightest and the Weightiest matters ; between the smallest and the greatest Goods in the World ; *i. e.* between *Earthly Kingdoms* and the Kingdom of *Heaven* : For certain, we could not chuse but think so *meanly* of worldly Thrones and Crowns and Sceptres ; and feel such an ardent *Desire* after the Heavenly ; That so far should we be from counting it a *Trouble*, as to chuse it for the sweetest *Pleasure* of our Lives, To bestow our selves in *Pursuing* and securing the Kingdom of God ; who has been so abundantly Kind and Good to us, as to Prepare it for us, and Make us for it, as our true, our *Ultimate*, and most Blessed *End*.

CHAP. VII.

The First Path to the Kingdom of God.

BUT let us now see what's to be done, that we may surely attain to the most desirable and Happiest *End*. Where we need not to be much at a Loss, When the King of Heaven himself was pleased to come down from thence, to Open and shew us the *Way* thither. And this our great Master and Leader has pointed us out *Four* several Ways, the best and surest, to bring us to his Kingdom.

The *First* is, *Mat. 6. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, &c.* Thus *Moral* Philosophy begins at the *End*. And our *End* is the Kingdom of God : Which Kingdom will be ours, if we'll take the Ways which our blessed Guide sets before us. But the *Righteousness* of the Kingdom is that, at which we must Aim ; If the *Blessedness* of it be that which we would Attain. For the *End* is one thing, and the *Mark* another. The *Mark* is a *Sign* or Spot, at which the Arrow is directed : But the *End* is the *Prize* to be won by him that hits it. The *Mark* of our Actions which God has propos'd is *Righteousness* : The Reward for hitting it, his heavenly Kingdom.

But the Righteousness of this Kingdom is not that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; which lies in the observation of Rites and Ceremonies; Nor that of *Philosophers*, which reaches no higher than the Light of humane Reason, deprav'd by Sin, will direct us; 'Nor yet *only* that of Christ *Imputed*, 'by which we are Justified in the Sight of 'God; But also, (what Results from this,) 'such a Righteousness *Inherent*, whereby 'we are indeed *Renewed* in our selves; and Taught and brought also to *Love the Lord our God with all our Heart, and Soul, and Mind, and Might: And our Neighbour* (tho' our Enemy,) *as our selves.* Of which Mark and End speaks the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 22. Ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the End everlasting Life.*

Thus then does our Heavenly Teacher mind us, *First of all to seek the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness.* So that our *primary* Thought and main Desire should not run out upon any Temporary Good; But to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven; and to yield the best Obedience we are able to that first and *greatest* Command: Which because the bigger part of men do not; therefore *many* are said to be *Called*, and *Few chosen.* The most so Living and carrying, that it seems to be their *Last Thought*, How they shall reach to the Kingdom of Heaven. Neither do they seek any thing, indeed,

deed, more *coldly*, than that Kingdom and its Righteousness. As if the Lord had bid, seek first a Kingdom of this *World*, and its false Tricks; and then the Kingdom of Heaven shall come in as a *Supplement*. But let us not think it so Contemptible, to be *Obtruded* upon such as thus *Post-pone* its Acquisition to every Trifle. For still Righteousness must be the Preparative for Blessedness.

And would we Learn some ready and easy way to that Righteousness which shall help us into the Blessedness? Let us hear what our Lord says again, *Mat. 5. 6. Blessed are they that hunger and Thirst after Righteousness: for they shall be filled.* And is it so, Lord? Dost thou make it such an easy matter to obtain Righteousness, as only to *Thirst* after it? How Blessed would the *Poor* think themselves, could they, upon such low Terms, presently so abound in Wealth, as to Furnish themselves with all things to which they had a Mind!

But the Craving humour after *Money* is one thing; and this Hungring and Thirsting after *Righteousness* quite another. For whoever are thus Eager and greedy, like them that be ready to choak for want of Drink, or to Famish for want of Meat, They cannot but evermore be *Thinking* of those Supplies, and *Longing* after 'em, and even with unutterable Groans, beg of God

for 'em. And whoever thus *Ardently* do Covet the Holy Good, God will hear 'em, and so fill 'em with Gifts of Righteousness; That out of the abundance of their Hearts shall flow the Words and Deeds which are Righteous. But no such Good is *Money*, that such as desire and ask it of God, should presently Speed. When this is the thing which so many do most wickedly *Abuse*; as None does, or ever can put the Righteousness to any *bad* purpose. This is like that *Wisdom*, which the Apostle tells us, *Any man that Lacks, may Ask of God, and Receive at his hands, Jam. i. 5.* Such is the truly kind *Bounty* of our Lord, who more readily and freely bestows the Good things upon us, most needful for us, than we can Ask or desire 'em.

He then, that here is *Indigent* and Needy, of that which must be had, to help him into the Kingdom of God, Let him but Ask of God as he ought, *i. e.* with all his Heart, seriously; and with Groans and Importunity: And he may assure himself to Receive: Because God imparts to all that so Ask, and gives no *Repulse*; Nor dispenses out his Gifts sparingly; but *Liberally*, and abundantly. Neither does he *Upbraid any*; as if he took it ill, that they Askt too oft, or too much.

O then, what shall we say to this? Who will find an Excuse in the day of Judgment,
for

for his *Ignorance*, or for his *Unrighteousness*? When 'tis but *Hunger* and *Thirst* after the Contrary, and Cry to God for it, and thou shalt be *satisfy'd* with it; So as not to continue Greedy after the Baits of Sinful Flesh, nor drawn away with the Lure of vain Honour, or Sick for any earthly Goods; But Live (and love to Live,) so Godly, Soberly, and Righteously in this World, that thou may'st come to Live most richly, sweetly, and Gloriously for ever in the World to come.

C H A P. VIII.

The Second Path to the Kingdom of God.

ANother *Path* of Righteousness which our Blessed Guide has describ'd to us, is *Mat. 5. 3. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit; For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* In which Place he does not so oblige us to empty our Chests or our Purses, as to put our selves in the case of that *Poor body*, who needs our Charity: But altogether to rid and empty our Hearts of the *Inordinate Affection* and Covetous Craving of this World's Good. For tho' he offers us infinite Riches, He will not Give 'em, unless we offer him the bosom of our Heart, Open and empty to receive

em. Seeing *Covetousness* is the Root of all Evil, 1 Tim. 6. 10. What the Original there charges with all the Wickedness, (*Philargury*,) is the Love of *Silver*: And the Root of all Good is the Heavenly Grace of *Charity*: Which two can never dwell together. So that, unless a Man be made truly *Poor in Spirit*, Till, whether he have much or little of the World, He has not a Heart so set upon it, but he can distribute readily to the *Needy*; and is not for converting to his own Use any more than's Necessary: He cannot fulfill the *Righteousness* of the Kingdom of Heaven, so as thereby to *Ensure* the Kingdom it self.

This is that same Path to Life Eternal, wherein *Christ* our Lord first went himself; who for our Sakes made himself *Poor*; that thro' his Poverty we might be made Rich, 2 Cor. 8. 9. And tho' he wanted not Supplies; Yet he gave up the Bag to *Judas*, whom he knew to be a Thief, John 12. 6. Giving us to understand, how clear was his Mind from any Bent to the World. In the same Path also follow'd him his Apostles; For whom it had been no hard matter, to increase in *Wealth*, and heap up the greatest Treasures; When so *Conspicuous* they were, for the Signs and Wonders which they wrought; and spake in the Language of all Nations, and were admired throughout the World, for their prodigious *Wisdom*. But they

they who once had said, *Lord we have Left all to follow thee, Mat. 19. 27.* and had tasted the heavenly Sweets of Freedom from the *Birdlime* and bewitching *Enchantment* of Riches, were content with Food and Raiment, and reckoned Godliness and the Righteousness of God's Kingdom *great Gain*.

After them followed Kings and many Great ones of the World, Men and Women who stript themselves of their Wealth; to embrace a *voluntary Want*: Tender-hearted, and open-handed to all that were Needy: and *Parsimonious* and hard only to Themselves. And we never hear of their Throwing away their Money in Gauds and Vanities, in Pomp and Gallantry, in Plays and Banquets, in Pride and Lust, in Riot and Extravagancy; But only, of their *Profuseness* in Alms, and the purposes of Charity. While they went *Plain*, and far'd *hard*, and Liv'd *mean*: as if they Grudg'd all to Themselves, and were *Niggards* only for their own proper Uses. Shewing how they spent their great Wealth, and what little or no Regard they had for the Fulness of the World. And no wonder if Persons so *Poor in Spirit*, and divested of all *Secular Cares*, made large *Strides*, and quick *Expedition* to the Kingdom of Heaven.

‘ But if this be one sense of the *Poverty of Spirit*; yet I am satisfy'd, that it has another

' nother *Acceptation* : And together with
 ' the Contempt of Riches, and Living a-
 ' bove the Love of this World's Wealth,
 ' (which I must confess is a very needful,
 ' as well as eminent Attainment) It must
 ' also take in that *Lowliness of Mind*, which
 ' makes a Man very *Mean* in his own Eyes,
 ' and so think *contemptibly* of himself, as if
 ' none were viler and *worse* than he : None
 ' more Unworthy and *Abject*, yea and
 ' Loathsome, before the holy Majesty of
 ' Heaven. Therefore can he calmly and
 ' contentedly bear *Rebuke*, Disgrace and
 ' Contempt, as his due Desert. So does
 ' the *sense of Sin* strip a Man of *Pride* and
 ' Self-conceit, that he is very forward to
 ' *Esteem each other better than Himself* ; and
 ' is so far from Glorifying with the *Pharisee*,
 ' that he bewails his own *Wretchedness* and
 ' Beggary ; Lies low, and earnestly cries
 ' for Mercy.

' And to be of such an *Humble and Contrite*
 ' *Spirit*, I cannot but take it to be *Poor in*
 ' *Spirit* ; and on the surer side too : For
 ' there may be a *Pride* even in Throwing
 ' away one's Wealth, and the *Vain-glory* of
 ' *Prodigality*. Yea, many that are *Indigent*
 ' and Beggary, yet may be very High-
 ' minded, great *Braggadocio's*, and none
 ' more Self-conceited. While we see some
 ' that have all the Fulness of the World,
 ' not value themselves at all upon it ; but

Con-

‘ *Condescend to men of Low estate, and put
‘ themselves upon a Level even with the
‘ Meanest ; Inclined and ready to serve the
‘ Poorest body. And such, I cannot but
‘ think my self oblig’d to reckon some of
‘ the Poor in Spirit, tho’ Rich in Estate ;
‘ and the more to Honour ’em, for so little
‘ Insisting upon their Honour. Yea, accord-
‘ ing to the sentence of God’s own Word,
‘ I must count them in the ready way to
‘ be Exalted, for so Humbling themselves ;
‘ and not far from the Kingdom of Heaven ,
‘ because some of the Humblest upon Earth.*

C H A P. IX.

The Third Path to the Kingdom of God.

THE next Path mark’d out by our Di-
vine Infallible Guide is, *Mat. 5. 10.*
*Blessed are they that are Persecuted for Righte-
ousness sake : for theirs is the Kingdom of
Heaven. Here’s the wonderful Wisdom from
above : but such as is quite hid from the
Wise of this World. For who would ever
Believe, were he not God who said it,
That ’twere good to be Poor in Money,
but Rich in Adversity ? Yet so indeed we
shall find it : and nothing more conducing
to the true Riches, (such as are our Quali-
fications for the Heavenly Kingdom,) than
a Mind*

a Mind empty of the Love of this World's Good, and full of Desire to Suffer, as well as to Do, for our Lord. Hear Himself in the Case, Luke 6. 24, and 5. *Wo to you that are Rich; for ye have received your Consolation: Wo to you that are Full; for ye shall Hunger. And a little before, Blessed are ye Poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that Hunger and Weep, and are Hated, and Reproached, and Cast out for my sake: Rejoice ye in that day, and Leap for Joy: For behold your Reward is great in Heaven.*

Hear also what his Apostle says of Riches and of Sufferings, Jam. 1. 2, 3, 12. *My brethren Count it all Joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations: Knowing that the tryal of your Faith worketh Patience. Blessed is the man that endureth Temptation; For when he is Tryed, he shall receive the Crown of Life. Where he not only calls to Endure and be Quiet, but to Rejoyce; yea, and count it all Joy. Take it for the matter of your greatest Gladness. But Chap. 5. 1. 'He has a sorrowful message for them who think they are so well Provided and fortified, as to put all sorrow far enough from 'em. Go to now ye Rich; weep and howl for the Miseries that shall come upon you. And Chap. 4. 9. Be Afflicted, and Mourn, and Weep: Let your Laughter be turn'd to Mourning, and your Joy to Heaviness.*

This

This carries a strange sound : But many things might be offer'd for the Reason, why *Persecution* should make a man *Blessed* ; which looks more likely to make him most *wretched*. I will content my self with this *One*, Because *Persecution* is like the fiery *Furnace*, which Boils Meat, Refines Silver, and Tries the Gold. For thus the fiery Tryal, patiently endured, quite changes the Sinful, Purges the Imperfect, and Approves the Just : So proving wonderfully Beneficial to all.

For instance, The Sinner is like *Raw-flesh*, which (you know,) unless prepar'd with the Fire, is not to be eaten by men, but cast to the Dogs : So full is he of crude ill *Humours*, The Lust of the Flesh, which is *Sensuality* ; The Lust of the Eyes, which is *Covetousness* ; and the Pride of Life, which is *Ambition* ; that nothing can be more contrary and Loathsome to the most Holy Lord. But the Fiery Tryal comes, and fetches out the Raw offensive Humours, and makes him so forget and Loath his *Fleshly Lusts*, his filthy *Lucre*, and his Proud *Aspiring* after Honour, that he becomes quite of another Mind and Temper.

But then, for the next, He that is free from *Scandal*, and the great Transgression, yet still very Imperfect, and wanting in many things ; Too fond of his *Flesh*, still hunting after vain *Pleasures*, Greedy of *Gain*,
and

and not come to Loath the *Follies* of the World ; He is like the *Silver*, that has a great deal of *dröfs* mingled with it : But when thrown into the Furnace of Persecution , and there quietly bearing the Indignation of the Lord , he finds a Separation of that dross, and the Carnal desires falling off ; and his Mind rais'd to Contemplate and Affect the things Above. He thinks it Time then, to *Live Righteously, Soberly , and Godly in the present World ; Looking for the blessed Hope, and Glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Yet further, He that is as the *Gold*, grown to such a Perfection of *Love*, as is attainable in this Life, yet may be Try'd in the Fire of Persecution, least he shou'd be censur'd by others, or fear'd by himself, to be but *Brass*. For in passing thro' the Fire, the Tryal of his Faith may be *found more precious, than of Gold that perisheth, to Praise, and Honour, and Glory.* 1 Pet. i. 7. And thus, his Hopes are rais'd to be full of Immortality; and the most comfortable Expectation of everlasting Glory. For *Tribulation worketh Patience ; and Patience Experienceth ; and Experience Hope ; and Hope maketh not ashamed.* Rom. 5. 5.

Thus the God infinitely Wise and Good, even when he may seem to Spoil and Destroy, Promotes and Advances his Friends
and

and Beloved : till he bring 'em to the Participation of his own Kingdom and Blessedness everlasting.

Now is it not strange, that so Few shou'd ever reach to those Blessed Goods, which lye open to all ? When *Persecution* may so easy, even every where be found ; in the House, and on the Way ; In the Town, and in the Country. For where is it, that the *Wicked* do not Spight, and Oppose, and Abuse those that are better than themselves ? That sentence of the Apostle, who does not find it to be a certain Truth ? 2 Tim. 3. 12. ' *All that will Live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution.* ' Even ' every one has a Fling at the heavenly ' *Passengers*, that are directly bound for *Jesalem* above: As all the Dogs run with open mouth, after him that Gallops thro' the Town.

But we, as *Nice Soldiers*, fly the Fiery Furnace : Or being Injur'd by the *malignant Adversary*, we Return as bad agen: And many times are so far from bearing Persecution, that we are readier to *Inflict* it. ' Like the Scoffing *Ishmael*, making a mock ' of the Brother, that is Holier than our ' selves ; and so betraying our selves to be ' *after the Flesh*, by *Persecuting him that's born* ' *after the Spirit.* Nor do there want such Enemies of a man's own House, that will Praise him, for *Avenging himself*, and
Throw-

Throwing back the Load upon him that cast it. Yet we are called *Christians*, even while we so Despise the *Commands* of Christ.

C H A P. X.

The Fourth Path to the Kingdom of God.

BECAUSE these things already laid down seem to carry such Difficulty in 'em, that but very few may Understand 'em, and much fewer are willing to make Experiment of 'em ; Therefore our blessed Guide points out yet another Path, and that Narrower than all the rest, *Mat. 11. 12. The Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence : and the Violent take it by force ;* q. d. I well understand how ready men will be to cry out of *Paradoxes*, and Hard sayings ; That the *Poor* should be Blessed, and the *Rich* Miserable : That we should Rejoyce in *Persecutions*, and Mourn under *Prosperity* : Neither was I Ignorant, How few would ever let go *Present* Goods, for the sake of *Future* ; and wish for Evils in *band*, that they might Escape greater to *come*. But I who am the Truth it self, neither ought, nor could speak any thing, but what should be found most certainly True.

Now

Now therefore have I added, That the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be Gain'd, but by some mighty *Efforts*; and that none but the *Violent* do lay hold on Eternal Life. So, *Luke* 18. 24. *How hardly shall they that have Riches enter into the Kingdom of God? 'Tis easier for a Camel to go thro' a Needle's Eye.* And *Mat.* 7. 14. *Strait is the Gate and Narrow the Way that leads to Life, and few there be that find it.* Again, *Mat.* 13. 44. He compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a *Treasure hid in a Field*, and a *Pearl of great Price*; which a man cannot obtain, unless he *Sell all that he has*. He must Leave whatever he is Possess'd of on Earth, to be so Enstated in the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus Positive is he, *Luk.* 14. 33. *Whosoever Forsaketh not all that he has, cannot be my Disciple.* Now this *Renunciation*, Tho' we understand it but of the *Mind's Preparation*, and the *Heart's Disengagement*; yet because this *Disengagement* of the Heart from the Love of the World, and that real Preparation of the Mind to let go all Temporal things, whenever God's Glory and the Soul's Safety do require it, is no such Easy attainment, nor to be found but in very few hands; Therefore were the Parables added of one going to build a *Tower*, that had not wherewithal to *Finish* it; and of a King designing to make war against another King, yet wanting *Equal Forces* to meet him,

him, with any hopes of *Victory*. And if the Building of a Tower without a great stock of Money, and the Engaging in Battel against a potent Enemy without a mighty Army, are things not only very Difficult, but quite *Impracticable*; How much harder will it be, to Accomplish both these *Enterprizes* at once? And yet both of 'em is he oblig'd to Perform, who would win and secure to himself the Kingdom of Heaven. For both the Tower must be built that reaches up to Heaven; I mean, the *Good Works*, which are the *Way* to that Kingdom, and the *Dispositions* to fit up a *Candidate* for it: And he must also Fight with many and mighty Opposers, even the whole *Posse* of unclean, malicious *Spirits*, that set themselves, with all their Powers and their Instruments to Obstruct the Building.

Of this we find a very proper *Adumbration* in the Children of *Israel*, desirous to Re-edify *Jerusalem*, after it had been Demolisht by the *Chaldeans*: Yet so Interrupted by the Heathen round about 'em, Warring with 'em, that they were fain to *Work* and *Fight* both together. *Ezr. 4. 4. The Enemy weak'ned their hands, and Troubled 'em in Building. And Neb. 4. 17. They that Builed on the Wall, and they that bore Burdens, with those that Laded, Every one, with one of his hands wrought in the Work, and with the*
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other hand held a *Weapon*. From all which we may Infer, That the Heavenly Kingdom is not to be Won without many sore *Conflicts*, and very hard Struggle, by them that are Wedded to Earthly things, and have not learned to *Tame* the Carnal *Concupiscence* at home, nor to Fight with the Invisible *Antagonists* abroad.

But whoever will give 'emselfes (by the Grace of God,) to the study and acquisition of Christian Perfection, (as far as 'tis Attainable;) not in an *Oscitant* dreaming manner, but with attentive Minds ponder the words of Christ, 'and endeavour to 'follow the steps of him and his Saints; 'and use that holy *Violence*, not only to 'strive against Flesh and Blood that hinder; 'But also *Strive with God in Prayer*, for 'that Grace which will promote and Perfect the Design; They shall by degrees find the Way widened, and the Gates opened, their Strength Augmented, and their Enemies diminisht; And thro' the manifestation of God's Love, and further communication of his Grace, shall begin to reckon the *Burthen Light, and the Yoke Easy*; and perceive that Promise, *Isa. 4. 31.* accomplished in themselves, *They who Trust in the Lord shall renew their Strength; To run, and not be Weary, To Walk, and not Faint*: and be able to say with the royal Prophet, *Psal. 119. 32.* *I will run the way of thy Commands with an Enlarged heart.* Thus,

Thus, to many it has not been found Heavy and *Tedious*, but short and *Delicious*, to spend even whole Nights, as well as Days, in the Religious Service. And so, St. *Augustine* came to declare, How *delightful it was to him, To want those carnal Delights, which once he thought there was no Living without: i. e.* When he came to Relish the Sweets of *Divine Love*, and the Joys of Internal Heavenly *Contemplation*. Let none then here Despond, and *Faint in their Minds*; but hope in the Help of the most High and Almighty; who, as he *Made us for Himself, also Draws us to Himself*: And will grant us that highest Favour, To sit down in his Kingdom, thro' the *Merits* of his Son; as he has been pleas'd to Remember us in our Lowest State, and Redeem us, at the Expence of his *Blood*.

Do not Deject thy self then, O *Christian Soul*, with the *Difficulties* of the Way; but Confide in the Lord, who would not Invite thee to *Seek first his Kingdom*, If he were not Ready to *Enable* thee with his Assistance. But with a Greatness and *Fortitude* of Mind, Set upon this heavenly *Expedition*, where's no room for Demurring or *Hesitation*. For if there be a great *Work* to be done, There's also a most glorious Reward to be *Won*. And if mighty are the *Enemies* that make Opposition, Stronger is the *Power* of his Arm, who Calls and Girds thee to the Combat.

Combat. And where so many of all Ages, Sexes, and Qualities have gone before thee, thro' this *Way* to the Kingdom, Why must not thou (following their Steps,) also reach happily to the same blessed *End*? For they were not of *Stone* or *Iron*; but of the same *Flesh and Blood*, and as Frail, as Thy self. Therefore, 'twas not thro' their own *Ability*; but going forth in the Strength of the Lord *Almighty*. And be thou never so Infirm thy self, yet why may'st thou not Succeed alike, *Trusting in the Name of the Lord, and staying thy self upon thy God*? Cast thy self upon him (saith St. Aug.) and he will not leave thee to Miscarry. So depending with an *Humble Confidence*, Thou shalt find his *Favour and Assistance*. For God is *Faithful*, and cannot *Deny himself*. But *Two* things here he does require of thee; The one, that thou firmly Resolve to prefer the *Glory of God*, and the *Salvation* of thy Soul, above all Considerations else in the World: The other, that thou Confide not in thy own *Wit* or *Strength*, but in his *Omnipotence* and *Infinite Love*. And thus doing, Thou shalt find the *Crooked made Strait, and the Rough places Plain*, Isa. 40. 4. Yea, thou shalt serve the Lord with Gladness; and, as Psal. 138. 5. Sing in the Ways of the Lord, because great is the *Glory of the Lord*.

D

The

The Second B o o k
Of the Saints Eternal Felicity;
Under the Title of
 The CITY OF GOD.

C H A P. I.

Of the Beauty of God's City.



Glorious things are spoken of thee thou City of God, Psal. 87. 3. Therefore has it been my Ambition, by the help of Meditation, (tho' as but thro' a Glass darkly,) to see thy Glory. And what first here offers it self to be consider'd, is why the Saint's Felicity, which holy Scripture calls the *Kingdom of God*, should also be called the *City of God*?

The *First* Reason of which I take to be this; Because, as it goes by the name of a
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Kingdom, for its *Wideness*, So may it bear the title of a City, for its *Fairness*. For to hear of a Vast Kingdom, suggests the unpleasing *Ideas* of many *Desart* and *Rude* places in it; many craggy Mountains, rough Valleys, wild Forests, Rocky Precipices, Boggs and Wafts, fit only for the Possession of Savage Beasts: But because the *Blessedness* above can admit of nothing that in the least shall be *offensive* or Inconvenient, therefore the Holy Ghost in Scripture sets it forth, under the Similitude of a most beautiful City. And tho' it be Extended far and wide, as a Kingdom; Yet does the whole shine and glitter, as a most frequented and most Opulent City.

For in Cities, (especially the *Capital* and greater,) are to be seen all the finest and brightest *Objects*, to please and amaze the Spectators; Adorned Churches, stately Palaces, pleasant Gardens, large Courts, a multitude of rich Houses, noble Streets, Fountains, Pillars, Pyramids, Obelisks, Theatres, Towers, Treasuries, and Repositories of all Good things, for the Use and Comfort of Life.

O what would be the Beauty of *Italy*, were it clear'd of all the barren and desolate Places; So that the whole Nation all over should shine like *Rome*: Not as now it is; But as under *Augustus*; who found it of *Brick*, and made it of *Marble*! And how

splendid had been the *Holy Land* of old, If the whole had made that Figure which *Jerusalem* did, before destroyed by the *Romans*; as *Josephus* describes it, The Wonder of the World, for *Magnificence*, and every thing in it, to Entertain and Ravish the Sense!

O then, what is that *Jerusalem* above, the City of the great King, which takes up all the Kingdom of Heaven; and makes that Kingdom of all Kingdoms, so *Refulgent* every where, as if the whole were but one sweet and Glorious City! No where Void, no where Deformed, no where Horrid, Squalid, or Unpolisht! Such, most assuredly, is the Heavenly City that no one can in earnest think any thing agreeably of it, but he must be *Enflam'd* with Longings after it: And none so Longs for it, but above all things in the World, still he will Seek it, and never rest, till he find it.

Hear how the elder *Tobit* sings its Praise, Chap. 13. 11, 16, 17, 18. All generations shall praise thee with great Joy. For *Jerusalem* shall be built up with Sapphires, and Emeralds, and precious Stones: Thy Walls and Battlements, and Towers with pure Gold: And the Street shall be pav'd with Beril, and Carbuncle, and stones of Ophir. All her streets shall say, Allelujab. And they shall praise him, saying, Blessed be God, that hath Exalted thee for ever. With whom St. *John* joins in Consort,
Rev.

Rev. 21. 18, 19, 21. *The Building of the Wall of the City was of Jasper; and the City was pure Gold, like to clear Glass: and the Foundations of the Wall of the City were garnish'd with all manner of precious Stones: And the Twelve Gates were twelve Pearls: and every several Gate was of one Pearl. And the Street of the City was pure Gold.*

Tho' we take not all this in the Letter, as if the new *Jerusalem* were to be seen adorn'd with just such Gold and precious Stones, as this Earth affords: Yet after this manner is it exprest, That we might conceive the Heavenly City to be so much more Excellent than any Earthly, as Gold is better than Clay, Pearls than Pebbles, Stars than Lamps, the Sun than Torches, Earth than Heaven, and God the Eternal Maker, than any mortal Builder. But because we are (a little beyond,) to describe the Beauty of all its Parts, we'll here add no more.

C H A P. II.

Of the Concord and Peace of the City of God.

A Nother Reason why the Kingdom of God is call'd a City may be this; Be-
cause

cause a Kingdom containing even an infinite number of divers Countries, Tongues, Manners, Laws, distinct from one another, Many of the same Kingdom never See one another; much less are they, in any common *Correspondence* or intimate Friendship, joined together. But in a City the Members are all of the same Language; and have all the same Laws, Customs, and Manners. Therefore, it bears the name both of a Kingdom and a City; Because the Inhabitants of the Heavenly Kingdom, tho' never so many and Innumerable, (Angels and Men,) Yet are they all Fellow-Citizens, unanimously knit together, and Governed by one only Law of *Love*. All there, *of one Heart and of one Soul*. And because Charity is the most opposite to Hatred and Envy, Broils and Discord, Brawling and Contention; Therefore, from that holy City are forever banisht all Spight and Malice, Wrath and Quarrels, and whatever is Injurious to the closest Unity, the most cordial Agreement, and perfect Friendship. There *Charity* Reigns, and with it, *Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*.

Soon after the Creation, There was *War* in Heaven, between *Michael* and the *Dragon*; But the Arch-Angel and his happy *Colleagues*, who stood in the Truth, and kept Faith and Loyalty to their Lord, obtained

obtained a glorious Victory over the *Dragon* and his cursed *Confederates*; Who (Lifted up with Pride,) Revolted from the great Lord of all. And the *Dragon*, that old *Serpent* who is called the *Devil* and *Satan*, that seduceth all the World, was cast into the Earth. *Rev. 12. 9.* And from thenceforward, the holy City *Jerusalem* was Compact together; And nothing but Peace within her Walls and Borders; No noise of the Trumpet sounding to Battle ever any more there to be heard.

What therefore more sweet and Happy than this City; where all dwell together in such harmonious *Unity*! They who to their cost and smart, Experience the *Plague* of War and Plunder and Slaughter, *Sacrilege*, *Sword*, and *Fire*, can tell how to *Admire* and *Predicate*, to *Extol* and cry up the sweet Blessings and heavenly Delights of *Peace*. But beside the dreadful Calamities of public *Wars*, Who in his City, or his own House, has not found the Bitterness and Curse of *Animosities*, *Jars*, and *Feuds*, among such as are ready to *Tear* and devour, and even *Eat up* one another? 'And O how vexatious and
' full of Trouble is the Life, To *Cohabit*
' and converse with men of rugged and
' boisterous *Manners*, of hot and Turbulent *Spirits*, that can put a perverse *Interpretation*, even upon the kindest *Intention*;

‘ and are for Taking every thing in the
 ‘ worst *Construction*!

The Counsel given, *Ecclus. 7. 2. is,*
Depart from the Unjust, and Iniquity shall
turn away from thee. Happy Departure!
 But alas! Whither, whither shall we go,
 To get away from the *Unjust*? And if
 they are still to be found even every where
 all over such a World as this, Evils then
 will accompany us even in all Places what-
 soever; ‘Till we are got out of our
 ‘ *Exile* in this *Mesick* and *Kedar*, among
 ‘ such Haters of all fair Accord, who when
 ‘ we speak of Peace, are for War.

What says the same Author again, *Ecc-*
lus. 25. 16. I had rather dwell with a Lyon
and a Dragon, than to keep house with a
wicked Woman. And if the Partner of ones
 Life is, (by wicked and Savage Disposi-
 tion) *Metamorphos’d* into a Lyon and a Dra-
 gon; To what cutting Grief, and even
 perpetual Vexation then are many poor
 mortals *Chain’d*? ‘Yea, where all that do
 ‘ but think themselves oblig’d to be any
 ‘ Better than their Neighbours, must look
 ‘ to Suffer from *Persecuting* Hands or
 ‘ Tongues, How Unhappy is the City
 ‘ of this World, in which *he that Departs*
 ‘ *from Evil, shall make himself a Prey*; and
 ‘ there’s even the continual *Necessity* of an
 ‘ Enemy, and to live in a state of War;
 ‘ Either *Contending* with the Wicked, and
 ‘ *Suf-*

' *Suffering* from them ; Or else *Losing*
' ourselves with Heaven, by *Complying*
' with 'em ?

For if thou practise *Piety*, Thou'lt En-
rage the *Ungodly* : But if thou art for do-
ing Like 'em, that thou may'st the better
Escape 'em, Thou wilt, by that means,
Engage one against thee, that will be to
thee (both Living and Dead,) the most
dreadful *Enemy*. O Wretched deadly Coun-
trei ! Where no body can avoid *War* and
Persecution ; No body can find *Peace*
and quiet *Conversation* ! Only the *Jeru-*
salem Above is *Free* from all such Di-
sturbance and Molestation. Shall we
not then, with all our Souls, Love
and Praise that heavenly City, and
Long to be in it ? There to Dwell,
where Persecution shall be banish'd, and
Wars shall cease ; where no Broils shall
have any place : ' Nothing to Trouble
' or Molest shall be felt or found, shall
' be seen, or heard, or Fear'd, any more
' forever.

C H A P. III.

Of the Liberty of the City of God.

THE *next* Reason why the Kingdom of God is call'd a City may be, Because a Kingdom has the Form of a *Monarchy*, which seems to be a Restraint upon Liberty: And yet all the Citizens of Heaven are *Free*; as is that *Jerusalem above, the mother of us all.* Gal. 4. 26. So said that blessed Apostle, who was a very Experienced person; *caught up into Paradise*, To see the Manner and Usage of the Place. How well does that Kingdom deserve the name of a City, where they that serve the King are perfect *Freemen*? And all the Inhabitants of Heaven do enjoy not a Single, but *manifold Freedom*. For

I. Those Citizens above are Free from the Servitude of *Sin*; Not only so, as 'twas in the *first Paradise*; To have a Power, not to Sin, if they please; But not to have so much as any Power or Will, any more to Sin at all forever.

II. They

II. They have a Freedom from the Bondage of *Death*. Not only, as at first, a *Possibility* of not Dying; But an *Impossibility* ever to Dye. Nor think it strange, that here I place Liberty in a seeming Impossibility; so as not to be *able* to Sin or Dye; which, indeed, do speak the very Perfection of Liberty; To be so above the Power of Guilt and Mortality. For he that cannot Sin, is not only *now* Free from it; But also secure, that he shall never fall into it. And he that cannot Dye, is not only *Now* free from Death; but also, certain that it shall never come nigh him. Which, indeed, is the Liberty of God himself; Who, by his blessed Nature, *only has Immortality*. 1 Tim. 6. 19. But Angels and all Rational Souls, tho' they have no principle of Corruption in their Nature; Yet he that Made 'em can *Casheer* 'em. But the Blessed are sure that he *Will not*. And so they participate in the Dignity even of the *Divine Liberty*.

III. They have the Liberty from *Necessity*; and that in many Respects. For now we Mortals are under a Necessity to Eat and Drink, and Dress, and Sleep, and Labour; and one while to Stand, another while to Walk, another to Sit, or
Lye

Lye down. But the Saints in Heaven are under none of this Necessity; being got into *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* Rom. 8. 21. And how great is this Liberty, not only Poor men, but Pious men, yea, and also Rich men can testify by Experience. For how do *Poor men* Labour and scramble hard to provide Meat and Drink, and Cloaths, with other *Necessaries*, for Them and Theirs? And how Thankful would they be to any one, that would but Free 'em from the *Slavery* of such Necessity? Nor do some here forbear to help themselves, by Robbing of others: like the Unjust Steward, That *could not Dig*, and yet *asham'd to Beg*, Luk. 16. 3. was for Cheating his Lord, and by such *Thievery*; to serve his Necessity.

And for *Pious men*, that give their Minds to Heavenly things, They reckon it an uneasy Slavery to wait (as they are fain to do) upon the *Body*; which wants so many things, and steals away so much of their *Time*, from better matters: O how often do they Wish themselves out of such a ruinous *Tabernacle*; that they might be otherwise Taken up, than in such kind of *Drudgery*? Yea, even *Rich men*, who are Citizens of this World, and not much *Displeas'd* with the Servitude of such Necessity, which the others do bewail; If they were *wiser*, they would Judge *better*. Tho' the delici-
ous

ous *Fare* of their *Tables*, and the soft *Repose* of their *Couches*, and many other fine *Preparations*, *Eases*, and *Advantages*, tempt 'em to *bug* themselves in their *Happiness*; yet when they run into *Excesses*, and so fill their *Bodies* with *Maladies*; they are glad to take bitter *Potions*, and submit to the sharp *Discipline* of many painful *Remedies*. Yea, let 'em *Like* or *Dislike* it, They must either run into *Enmity* with *God*, and abide his heavy *Wrath*; Or else Engage in *Hostilities* with their own dear *Flesh*. And if they shrink from this as *Harsh* and *Grievous*; I am sure they'll find the other most *Dreadful* and *Intolerable*. From what an irksome *Necessity* then, are both *Rich* and *Poor*, *Good* and *Bad* set *Free*, when they come to feel the happy *Discharge* from all such *Yokes*? Yet further,

IV. There's a *Liberty* from the *Law*; that *Just*, but *Hard* Master; which is not for the *Righteous* above, who do not need the *Letter* of the *Law*; where they see all in its blessed *Maker*, and are so *confirm'd* in *Love*, that they cannot *Deviate* in the least from his holy *Will*. The *Just*, in this *Life*, tho' freed from its *Rigor* and *Condemnation*, yet are still subject to its *Direction* and *Obligation*. But to be *Eas'd* and *Acquitted* from all the care of *Keeping*, and from all the *Fear* of *Breaking* it, O how *Joyful* and *Happy* is that *Liberty*! The blessed *Re-*
verse

verse to the sad *Captivity* of those most cursed *Cast-aways*, that are *bound hand and foot*, and *cast into outer darkness*, and that *Furnace of Fire*, which they can neither *Abide*, nor *Avoid*. Tho' not a man in the *World*, but one of these *Two most Opposite Lots* must be his *Share*: Yet alas! So are the *Eyes* of most men *Blinded*, either with the *Smoak* of *Worldly Honour*, or the *Dust* of *Earthly Lucre*, or the *Enchantments* of *Fleshly Pleasure*, That they neither *See* nor *Consider* it, till sudden *Destruction* be upon 'em; and those *Eyes* are then *Opened* by the *Pain*, that before were quite closed by the *Sin*.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Situation and Form of the City of God.

BUT let us take the pleasure of *Returning* to the *Heavenly City*; and more particularly *Contemplate* its *Site* and *Form*, its *Foundation* and *Gates*, its *Walls* and *Streets*. Its *Situation* is upon the *holy Hills*. *Psal.* 47. 1. whereto agrees *St. John*, *Rev.* 21. 10. *The Angel carry'd me away in the spirit, to a great and high Mountain; and shew'd me that great City, the holy*
Jeru-

Jerusalem. But what Mountain so high as Heaven; yea the Heaven of Heavens? This is *the Hill of the Lord*, whither the man after his Heart Longed to *Ascend*. *Psal. 24. 3.* Such were the *Hills*, to which *he Lifted up his Eyes; Looking for his Help.* *Psal. 121. 1.* So Sublime is the City of God, as to *Surmount* all manner of Disquiet or Nuisance; and to be for ever Easy, in an undisturbed Tranquillity. For even the wicked Spirits, *Eph. 6. 12.* can never reach those *Heavenly Places.*

The Form of this City, *Rev. 21.* is represented as a perfect *Square*: where the Length is equal to the Breadth. Such an exact Figure as denotes the most compleat Righteousness which dwelleth there. Where nothing *Irregular* or perverse has ever any place. And how full of Admiration will it be, to see the innumerable Inhabitants of that City all endued with *Freedom of Will*; and yet in never a one of 'em, (to Eternal Ages,) any thing that is the least *Amiss*, in either Deed, or Word, or Thought, ever to be found?

This perfect Square may also inform us, That the Breadth of Heavenly Goods is equal to the Length: *i. e.* Infinite in *Plenty*, as well as enduring to an infinite *Eternity*. The Latitude speaks their *Abundance*, as the Longitude their everlasting *Continuance*. The holy *Topographer*, *Rev. 21.* describes
also

also the *Height* of the Heavenly City, as *Equal* to its *Length* and *Breadth*: Because the Goods there will be no less *Exalted* and *Supream*, than *Wide* and *Perpetual*. And no matter, if *Vitruvius* and *Vegetius* approve not the *Quadrangular* figure of a City: when they talk only of such a City, as fears the *Enemy*. For never any danger of this, in that City, where the Lord *maketh Peace in its Borders*. *Psal.* 147. 14. 'Tis too High for any Hurt ever to reach it. *Psal.* 91. 10. *No Plague shall come nigh those Dwellings*. 'Nothing in the least ever to Disturb the perfect Rest, and Ease, and Joy, of those most Blessed Inhabitants.

C H A P. V.

Of the Foundations and Gates of the City of God.

SO is the Heavenly City seated and Established, That it alone is said to *have Foundations*, whose Builder and Maker is God. *Heb.* 11. 10. which the Apostle gives for the Reason, why *Abraham* built no City or House in the Promised Land; but dwelt there as a *Foreigner*: Because he knew that Land to be but a *Figure* of an infinitely Better. And therefore in it, he would set up
no

no Building ; As expecting that which was much more *Firm* and Lasting, from the Heavenly Builder.

The Cities here built by Men , such as *Cain, Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Romulus, &c.* Because they be liable to wear away ; and at the World's End will all be utterly *Ruin'd*, and cease to be any more for ever ; Therefore do shew that they have no firm Foundation. And so much wiser than us, in this respect, were the *Patriarchs* of old , who tho' they Liv'd more than as long again as we , and seem'd much farther distant from the Heavenly City ; yet disdain'd to *Erect* any Cities or Houses, that were quickly to perish ; But dwelt in *Tents*, as *Strangers and Sojourners* ; By a sure and Lively Faith and Hope, Looking and Waiting for their City Eternal in the Heavens. Whereas we, so *short-Liv'd*, and just ready to be gone from hence, Lay about us, in Building and Adorning *Houses*, as if we should never Leave 'em, nor ever lookt for any Better. Are we not in this therefore, more like Heathen *Infidels*, than resembling the faithful *Patriarchs* ? Tho' we be called *Christians*, and know that our Lord and his Apostles neither had , nor would set up any City, Tower, or House upon Earth.

Yet I intend not this for a *Satyr* upon the *Princes* of the World, (tho' *Christians*) that *Erect* Cities ; Nor upon the *Private* persons

sons neither, that make themselves Agreeable Houses. For *David*, a pious King, was the Founder of *Jerusalem*; and therein forgot not a *Royal Palace* for himself. And still may the *Grandees* of the World live like Themselves; with *Distinctions* proper for their Qualities. And we take not upon us to *Abridge* any such, of the *Habitations* and *Accommodations*, which their *Estate* and *Rank* *Legitimate*, if not Require. We wou'd not be any such *Levellers*; but only *Monitors*: To warn of the *Excess*; and here supplicate a *Moderation*. That men of Lower station may not go to *Vye* with *Princes*: and that *Princes* may be content with their *Palaces*; and not Enlarge Piles to equal *Towns*. Yea, that none may betray such a *Valuation* and *Fondness* for these *Temporal Fruitions*, as if therein they Lodg'd their *Hearts*, and Laid up their Chiefest Good: But shew a better Remembrance of their *Pilgrimage*; more of the *Contempt* of the World; and more of the *Humility* of our Lord.

Now, For the *Gates* of the City, *S. John* tells us, *Rev. 21: 21. They are of Pearls*; as the *Structure* of the Walls is of *Jaspur-stone*; and the *Streets*, (yea, the whole City,) of *Pure Gold*. All which sure can signify no Less, than that the holy City is most *Precious* all over: But clear and *Transparent* throughout. For we know *Pearls* to be
Rich

Rich and White : And tho' there be the *Green Jasper* as well as White : Yet the Latter seems here design'd by the Apostle, When he calls it *Clear as Chrystal*. *Rev.* 21. 11. So when he tells us *the Streets are of pure Gold* ; he adds, *As it were Transparent Glass*, *ver.* 21. The whole City then, Whether you look upon the Gates, the Walls, or the Streets, is every where most Precious ; and has nothing in it Vile, or *Mean*, or liable to any Decay. But all White and *Diaphanous*. Because nothing there is Hid or covered: But all the Inhabitants see all things ; And no *Suspicion* of any Fraud or Danger. Therefore 'tis said, *The Gates shall not be shut at all by Day*. *For there shall be no Night* ; *ver.* 25. Nor Thief, nor Enemy, ever to be feared. He that doth never Sleep nor Slumber, being still its watchful Keeper and Preserver.

But what mean the *Gates*, the Wall, the Streets ? The Gates ever Open, denote the free *Access* of Men into the City of God and Angels ; Since our Lord Jesus has *open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers*. Nor is there One alone, but *Twelve Gates*, for the Faithful to Enter at: Three on every Quarter, *East and West, North and South*, *Rev.* 21. 13. Nor only open to *Jews* ; But to all Nations, from every Region of the Earth: Compar'd with all which, the *Jews* will be but a small Number. As our Lord
him-

himself has acquainted us, *Mat. 8. 11, 12.* Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven : But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast into outer Darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And *Mat. 21. 43.* The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you ; and given to a Nation, bringing forth the fruits thereof : From all Parts of the World then, shall enter at some of the Three Gates on a side, all that ever were Baptized in the Three great Names of the Blessed Trinity ; and that are found possess'd with the Three Christian Graces, of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Wall and Street of the City.

WHat may this *Wall* here signify, but the Divine Custody ? Which alone, without any other Watches or Defences, suffices to keep the City. For I (saith the Lord) will be to her a Wall of Fire round about ; and will be the Glory in the midst of her. *Zech. 2. 5.* Wonderful Promise ! *q. d.* The Fire both Burns and Lights : So will I Burn the Enemies, and Enlighten the Citizens. And thus is God himself the Wall of Fire to surround it : And the Light of Glory in the

the midst of it. After the same manner is it explain'd, *Rev. 21. 23. The City had no need of the Sun, nor of the Moon, to shine in it: For the Glory of God did Lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light of it.* The Glory of God, as the Sun, Illuminates their Minds; and the Lamb of God, as a Lamp, enlightens their Bodies. The *Man* Christ Jesus is a Lamp only, as compar'd with the *Divinity*. For otherwise consider'd, in it self, Even his *Humanity* shall Vye with the Sun for Glory. And if the *Righteous* shall shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father; *Mat. 13. 43.* Much more shall their Lord himself, the *Sun of Righteousness*, shine out to illuminate the City of God.

There remains only to be consider'd the *Street* of the City; which comprehends the whole Space within the Compass of the *Walls*; And this is the common *Resort* and *Habitation* of all the *Heavenly Citizens*. 'Tis all pure Gold. i. e. The *Love* bright and Burning, which holds 'em all entirely together: And makes 'em carry with the most pure cordial Affection to one another. And not only to each other, but all of 'em to their God; and he alike to all of them. *For God is Love: And he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1 Joh. 4. 16.* Whence that of our Lord, *Joh. 17. 20. 21.* Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also that shall Believe on me through their

their Word. That they also may be One, even as we are One.

O Blessed City, that's founded in Eternal Peace and Love ; where all are of *one Heart, and of one Soul* ; and fill'd with unspeakable Comfort and Joy ! *My Soul Longeth, Yea, even Fainteth* for thy Streets ; There to *Expatriate* and *Converse* with all the best and dearest of Friends. For what is so to be wish'd, by a Soul Groaning in the midst of a perverse Generation, and false Brethren, and a World that lies in Wickedness ; as to fly away to the Place, where sweet *Peace* dwells, and pure *Love* Reigns ? *O when shall I come and Appear there before God ? Psal. 42.2.* What so sweet to that Soul which Loves the Lord, as to see its Beloved, and be seen of Him, and by an intimate *Union*, and the most ravishing *Inhabitation*, to Dwell in Him ?

'Twould be an intolerable Boldness for Dust and Ashes to breath after thy *Courts*, O City of God ; And still more, for a little dirty Soul to Aspire after the *Embraces* of the Supreme Creator : But that he will be pleas'd to Excuse for the *Boldness*, who himself did give it ; When he pray'd his Father, *That we all might be One* ; As the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father : So that *we might be One in both* ; and so to continue for ever.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Temple of the City of God.

SOMewhat yet further remains here to be enquired after, in the City of our God. And that is, a *Temple* to Praise him in; and *Meat and Drink* for our selves to Live upon. (As to *Cloathing*, we need not be in care: For if *Adam* and *Eve* had no need of *Garments* in the earthly *Paradise*, much less will the *Saints* want 'em in the *Heavenly*; Where they shall be *cloathed with Light*, as with a *Garment*:) For the *Temple*; we are told, *Rev. 21. 22. I saw no Temple therein: For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.* Nor may this be thought strange, that *S. John* saw no *Temple* in the *Heavenly City*: For why are *Temples* here erected in the *Visible Church*, but for *Preaching* and *Sacraments*, and *Prayers* and *Praises*? Whereas in *Heaven*, *Preaching* the *Word of God* shall cease; where the *Uncreated Word* himself shall openly speak to all; and according to the *Promise* (there fully accomplished,) *Jer. 31. 34. They shall teach no more every man his Neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; For they shall all Know me, from the Least to the greatest of 'em.* Neither shall *Sacraments* there be
of

of any further Use : For what need the *Signs*, when the things signify'd are clearly Seen, and fully Enjoy'd ? *Prayers and Praises* here on Earth are offer'd up to God in the Church, that is call'd his *House* ; where he has promis'd a peculiar Presence and Regard. 2 Chron. 7. 15. *My Eyes shall be open, and my Ears Attent to the Prayer that is made in this Place.* But in the Heavenly City, when God is openly Seen and Heard by all, what need of a *Temple* any more ? And then, May it not also be asked again, why are God and the *Lamb* said to be the *Temple* of the City ? Holy Scripture is its own best *Interpreter* ; To open in one place, what's said in another, and to unfold the *Darker* Text by a *Plainer*. Now, *Psal.* 91. 1. It's said, *He that dwelleth in the secret places of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* Of which Words this may be the Sense, That whoever is Joyned to the Lord, by a sure *Affiance* in him, does q. set up his House in God ; where he may dwell Safe, and be free from the fear of Evil. And the same may be said of Prayer and Praise, That he who is Joyn'd to the Lord, by a pious *Reverence*, finds such a House in him, where Abiding, he duly Prays and Praises God. And so, in Heaven, The Lord God Almighty is the Temple of the Holy City ; Because the blessed Citizens there, very well regarding the *Omnipotence*, as well as

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Omnipresence of God, and reverently carrying, as close to him, and just under his Eye, In him they dwell, as their Temple ; where their Hearts are still offering up the grateful Sacrifice of their Praises.

Thus also, when they seriously and sweetly revolve in their Minds the Merits of Christ ; as he is the innocent Lamb of God, who Gave up himself an Offering of a sweet smelling savour unto God, They are drawn, and closely United to him by Love, and dwell in him, as a Temple ; there pouring out their Souls, with sweet Acceptance.

O that we (thro' God's especial Favour,) may begin and practise somewhat like this, here upon Earth ! To draw nigh to God with such Humility and Reverence, and to Depend upon him with such Trust and Confidence ; and so Delight in him, as our present Help, and house of Defence ; That we might not use to go over our holy Offices in a drowsy Listless manner ; as Thinking of somewhat else, or scarce Thinking at all ; But Pray and Praise with such Attention, Fervour, and Devotion ; That the Oblation might be indeed well pleasing to God, thro' Christ, and of singular Advantage and Comfort to our selves and others. Then might we gladly apply to our selves, *Sal. 50. 23. Whoso offereth Praise Glorifies me, and to him that orders his Conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God.* For the
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Divine Praises, 'made our *Sacrifice* by the 'Fire of Love; and fiducially offer'd up 'through the Mediation of Christ, upon 'the *Altar* of our Heart', go up with the Odour of an acceptable Savour; and open us a way to see that Salvation which God has prepared for them that Love him. All which Blessed Benefits, O how are they Lost, by the wretched Creatures, who go over Divine Offices with such wild *Vagaries* of Mind, and such wicked *Deadness* of Heart, That though they do bear some share in the external part of Praying and Singing along with others; yet they partake not at all of the heavenly *Consolation*, and the sweet *Anticipation* of Eternal Bliss.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Meat and Drink of the City of God.

OF this Heavenly *Sustenance* let us see the Angel's account, Rev. 22. 1, 2. He shew'd me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb: In the midst of the Street of it, and of either side of the River, was there the Tree of Life, which bare Twelve

manner

manner of Fruits ; and yielded her Fruit every Month : And the Leaves of the Tree were for the Healing of the Nations. I fear, lest some that hear this should wonder at the *Parfimony* that seems here to be signified ; and censure the Narrowness of the Heavenly Citizens Entertainments : As thinking , That there's more and better to be found, even in our *Wilderness-State* upon Earth : When we hear of no more but the Fruits of one Tree for Meats ; and only the Water of a River for Drink.

But let such as are tempted thus to surmise, call to mind, That in the Earthly Paradise, (where doubtless was better Provision, than any in our present *Exile*,) *Adam* had nothing granted him , but Fruits and Herbs to Eat, and Water to Drink. Yet because it was his *Punishment*, to be dispossest'd of these Entertainments, 'Tis an Argument to Convince us, That they *Exceed*ed all the Meats, and the Wines of this Life: Tho' still abundantly Inferior to the Tree of Life ; and the Living Water of the *Paradise Cælestial*.

But in this Vale of Misery , all are *Dis-temper'd* , And their Sense of Tasting was a kind of Bitter Relish, wherewith it is *Intemperate* ; which puts 'em upon Shifting and inventing *Varieties*, to take off that nauseous *Uneasiness*. But the Varieties, at the same time that they help to cure 'em of

the present *Fastidium* and Indisposition, do but feed and increase a worse *Ailment* and Malady. Whereas in the Earthly Paradise, all would have been *Healthy*; and so wholesome and pleasant were the Fruits and Waters there, as not only to Nourish, but also keep 'em still Hail and well, with a wonderful Delight.

But whatever was the condition of that Paradise, The Tree of Life, and Living Water in the City of God, (be sure) are no Meat and Drink common to Men with *Brutes*, 'nor such as threaten any danger 'in the Use, nor will ever be attended 'with any sad'ning *Perceptions* in the Consequence: But of such an excellent High 'and Divine nature, that they'll yield a full 'Satisfaction, with a pure *exquisite* Pleasure: 'For so the Sacred Poet applauds the Happiness of such as are admitted to Feast upon em'. *Psal. 36. 6. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House: And thou shalt make 'em drink of the River of thy Pleasure.* These are no corporeal, but *Spiritual Viands*: The Tree of Life being that Bread of *Understanding*, and the Living Water that Fountain of *Wisdom*, where-with the Author of *Ecclus. Chap. 15. 3.* tells us the Lord shall feed and Refresh such as Fear him. For, (as *S. Aug.* observes,) *In what relates to the Body, Meat is one thing, and Drink another: But as to spirituals, Meat and Drink*

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Drink are one and the same, i. e. Understanding and Wisdom; which, in the place cited, do signify but one thing, are the Meat which Nourisheth, and also the Drink which Quencheth and Refresheth.

Yet might we take the Living Water for *Wisdom*; and the Tree of Life for *Love*: According to the Dictates of that inspired Author, who gives the most accurate Description of this Heavenly City; 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *He that Loveth not, Abideth in Death. And we know, that we are passed from Death to Life, Because we Love the Brethren.* Now, both to Understand and to Love are true *Vital Actions*; Therefore the Saints Drink, in the City of God, is out of the River that flows from the Fountain of Life, even God himself: i. e. To participate even of the same *Wisdom*, wherewith God himself is *Wise*; which is the chief and supremacy, beyond all that even we are able to declare or think. And, again, Their Meat which they eat of the Tree of Life, is to enjoy the participation of that unspeakable *Love*, wherewith the Goodness which is clearly Seen, may be ardently *Lou'd*. Yea, that Love, wherewith God, who is an infinite Good, and the Fountain of all Goodness, Loves himself. And what this *Wisdom*, and this *Love* are, we may *Conjecture* as well as we can; but must never expect thoroughly to comprehend, till we attain

to be Fellow-Citizens with the Saints above.

For as to what we are told of the Tree of Life on either side the River, and producing its Fruits every Month, 'Tis only a *Metaphorical* Representation of things Spiritual, according to our *Sense* of the Natural. Thus the Sacred Writer would *Dreſs* before our Eyes, a Tree of the utmost *Goodness* and *Fruitfulness*: Pursuant to which design, he sets it on the bank of a River; that through its own native *Excellence*, and that constant *Imigation*, from the adjacent Moisture, it might *Luxuriate* in a Fertility quite beyond all that is ordinary; Not only to produce its Plenty, as other Trees do, *Annually*; but Repeat the Fruits *Monthly*. Twelve times every Year.

Nor is it a single Tree only here to be understood; but the sacred *Synecdoche* signifies many of the same kind, on each side of that River flowing through the midst of the City; Not far asunder one from another: That so the whole City might equally enjoy both the *River* and the *Fruit*. Now, it speaks the Trees *Goodness*, That it is the Tree of *Life*; and its wonderful *Fruitfulness*, to bear so oft: That the Citizens may ever have Fruits New and Ripe: New, of the present *Month*; and Ripe, of that which is past: Never Putrid, Wither'd or Insipid. All denoting the Meat and Drink of the

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sed, (*i. e.* the *Wisdom*, whereby they perfectly Know God, and the *Charity* wherewith they perfectly Love him,) to be of the very *Best*, and never to Fail.

What's added, *That the Leaves are for Healing of the Nations.* serves to instruct us, That in this our Pilgrimage, the *Fruits* themselves of the Tree of Life do not here reach to us; Only some of the *Leaves* drop down upon us; which though they bring not with 'em Eternal Life, yet are of singular use, to heal the *Maladies* of our present Life, and those sinful Ailments, of which now we all are sick, more or less. And what are these Leaves, but those of our *Bibles*, The Divine Words, by the Prophets and Apostles, brought from Heaven? Which O how sweet and wholesome an *O-dour* do they breath and shed forth upon all that are influenced by the Spirit of God! Read the Prophets, Read the Psalms, Read the Evangelists, Read the Apostles: All these Sacred Leaves do savour such Humility, Charity, Purity, as are not taught by any *Moral* Discipline or Philosophy. And no marvel; For those Leaves fall from the Trees of *Paradise*: But the humane Helps come no further than from some Higher places of the *Earth*.

Therefore, O *Christian Soul*, Be still gathering up and applying these healing Leaves, To make thee wholesome Remedies

for all thy Maladies. And by the Leaves, raise thy Thoughts to some Admiring apprehensions of the *Fruits*. Leaving the Swines husks in the dirt, Look up with a Longing desire, and pant after the most satisfying Fruits of Eternal Life. Think frequently of 'em; and in thy Mind and Memory, be much Chewing upon 'em; 'Till thou reach at last indeed to see 'em, and for ever Enjoy 'em.

C H A P. IX.

Of the Mystical Foundation of the City of God.

WE have been Viewing one *Structure* of the *Jerusalem* above: But let us now take notice of another. For the City comprehends, not only Foundation, Gates, Walls, and Streets; But also a general *Assembly*, who for the variety of their *Functions*, may likewise themselves be called Foundations, Gates, and Stones. Nay, peradventure, a City may more properly, go under the appellation of a *Corporation*, knit together by the same Laws and Customs; than so many *Piles* of Building united within the same Walls and Bounds.

Agreca-

Agreeable to this Notion, we read, *Rev.* 21. 12. of *Twelve Angels*, seen in the *Twelve Gates*; and also the *Names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel*. And, *1 Pet.* 2. 5. *Ye, as lively Stones are built up a spiritual House. So, Eph.* 2. 19, 20: *Therefore, ye are no more Strangers, and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God: And are built on the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles: Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone. The Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, that's the Foundation of the Fabrick: And upon that Revelation leans our Faith, which is the Beginning of our Salvation. But with the Blessed, there's an End of the Faith. For having attain'd to the Salvation of their Souls, they no longer do Believe, what they are come actually to See and Enjoy.*

Jesus Christ is the only Foundation, in propriety of speaking, *1 Cor.* 3. 11. And where the Apostles also are said to be *Twelve Foundations*, 'Tis only in *Him*, and as he spake by them. For all their Authority is from his *Grant*. And we build upon what they say, only as it is his *Word*.

But then, How can he be the Foundation, and also the *chief Corner-stone*? Must we believe him to be the *Highest*, and also the *Lowest*? At the *Top* and the *Bottom* both? Why not; in different *Respects*? For *Metaphors* do give divers *Names* to the

same Person, as he bears distinct Offices. And so our Lord, as the Foundation, bears all the weight of the Fabrick; To Support our Persons, and also Tolerate our *Infirmities*. When, as the Head-stone, he Rules over all; who must evermore submit unto him. And as the *Head of the Corner*, He joyns together the Walls of *Jews and Gentiles*; making 'em both one Church, and holy *Temple* to the Lord.

C H A P. X.

Of the Mystical Gate of the City of God.

S *Aug.* will have the Gates of the Heavenly City to signify the Twelve Apostles. Though *S. John Rev. 21.* mentions only the *Twelve Tribes of Israel*. And yet here's no Contradiction. For the Holy Land being a Type of the Heavenly City, 'Twas promised to *Abraham*; and divided among the twelve Tribes, as his *Posterity*. Therefore, their Names were written in the Gates; To shew, That the promise of Entrance, as right of *Inheritance*, belong'd only to the Children of *Israel*. But *S. John*, who speaks *Mystically*, understands by the Tribes of *Israel*, true *Israelites*, that are such, not according to the *Flesh*, but *Spirit*. Whereby the Apostles and their *spiritual Off-spring* also

also come in. For all are not Israel that are of Israel: Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all Children. Rom. 9. 6, 7. Many Branches were cut off from the Tree, for Unbelief. And others were Grafted in, through Faith. Upon the Jews Revolking, the Believing Gentiles became the true Israelites. And these now are the Children of Sarah and Jacob: Those, the Children of Hagar and Esau. Faithful Christians are Israelites indeed, and the Children of the Promise. Therefore to them belongs the right of Entrance in at those Gates of the Heavenly City, upon which are the Names of the Tribes of Israel. And the Angels in those Gates are as the Watch there; To take care, that none Enter, but such as have the right of Inheritance.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Mystical Stones in the City of God.

WHat are those Precious Stones in the City above, but such Heavenly Inhabitants as have obtained precious Faith? Which being the Acquisition of all Believers in general, It may be of some good Service, To describe the Qualification of such

such Possessors, for their own Satisfaction, and also for others Admonition. Now, Three things are requisite to any ones *Superedification* upon so glorious a Foundation; That he be a *Stone*, a *Living* stone, and *Polished* for the place.

I. They must be *Stones*, that are built on this Foundation: Not *Wood*, *Hay*, *Stubble*. That they may make *solid* Work in the Fa-brick. They must be Grave, Stedfast, continuing in Faith, Charity, Humility, and sincere Duty. Not such as are carried about with the wind of strange Doctrine, nor with the Lure of every Lust and Vanity.

II. They must be *Living* Stones; Full of Spirit, Zeal, and Fervency: Like their Glorious Head; Who, though he died once after the Flesh, still *Lives* in the Spirit: And so must they be spiritually *Alive unto God*, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

III. They must be *Squar'd* and *Polish'd*: Not Rough, Unhew'n, and Mishapen: But like those Stones for the Temple, 1 King. 6, 7. *Smoothed* and fitted, before they be brought thither. And what means the Squaring and Planing, But that here they must go through their works of *Mortification*, and Labour of Love, and Sufferings for Right-

Righteousness, and Conquests over their own stubborn Wills? Here, they must Abide the *Hammer*; and not be so Nice and delicate, as to Endure nothing Sharp or Bitter: But change their Revels into *Retirements*; their Luxury into *Abstinence*; Their wanton Prating into serious *Praying*: The gorgeous Dressing and high Feeding, into such a *Discipline* upon their Backs and Bellies, as shall kill the Pride and Lust; Taking Vengeance upon *themselves*, instead of seeking to be Avenged of their Adversaries: Counting it happier to *Endure*, than to swim in Pleasure: and reckoning with the *Apostle*, *Rom. 8. 18. That the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory to be revealed in us. Yea, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. That the Light Affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* For how far'd the Saints of old? and how our Lord himself, and all the best of his Followers in the World? How little had they of its Sweetness, and how much of the Sharp? Did they not Suffer, and so enter into Glory? To live here then in carnal Pleasure, is none of the way to that supreme Pleasure, which is at God's right hand forever.

What

What say'st thou to this, O Christian? If they, of whom the World was not Worthy, went under the Hammer of the Builder, to fit 'em for the heavenly City; What will become of thee, and thy Like, all whose Joy lies in Sinning; but nothing so Grievous to you as Repenting? One of the two you must have, Either to be Hew'd and Polish'd for the Heavenly Building here; Or be thrown by, as *Reprobate*, and condemn'd to lye under the Hammer elsewhere for ever.

For as to the making up of what was Wanting, in any future Purgatory, Never trust to any thing which they at Rome tell you. That Doctrine may help to replenish some of their Purses; but never to Relieve any of your Souls. No; Now is the only Time of Purgation: And if you are Wise, you'll never shun it, but catch the Time for it. First Looking unto *Jesús*, for the best Purgation, thro' Faith in his Blood: to cleanse you from all Sin: And then, making it your free voluntary Choice, to go under any proper requisite Discipline and Hammering here; That you may be not only Spared, but Blessed for ever.

the Earth, and Part after its Goods, and
Commanded **C. H. A. P. III** **Of Shunning the City of the World**
and Rave, and Fight for them. The
ing forth out of the Heavenly City.

AFTER all that has been said concerning
the Building of this City, it re-
mains now only to tell, what's needful
to incorporate us in the number of its most
Happy Citizens. And that may be said
in a Word. 'Tis to Renounce the City of
this World; and to Live here, as *Strangers*
and *Foreigners* in it. For it is not possible
that we should at once be Citizens of the
World, and Fellow-Citizens with the Saints
above; Nor can any indeed be Citizens of the
City of this World, but he that is not
Enfranchis'd of the City of God.

To apprehend this better, let us look
in holy Scripture; Two Cities are there
The *Earthly*, which began with Adam, and
was the first that was built; and the
City, Gen. 4. 17. *Adam* was the first
began in *Adam*, and *Adam* was the first
himself was the first that was built;
Image of *God*, and the first that was built;
which is the first that was built;
of the *Earth*, and the first that was built;
great *Earth*, and the first that was built;
Peace.

the Earth, and Pant after its Goods, and Content about 'em, Tear, and Swagger, and Rave, and Fight for 'em. The Prince of this City is the Devil, who being thrust out of the Heavenly City, Usurps a Tyranny over the Earthly. Tho' our Lord said, *Joh. 12. 31. The Prince of this World is cast out*: He did, indeed beat him out with the Staff of his Cross; and Triumph'd over his Powers in it. *Col. 2. 15.* Yet it speaks not his total Expulsion; as if he had quite Lost his Rule in the World: But Lost it in them, and in all them, and only them, who Join themselves to our mighty Deliverer: And Flying the Earthly City, are Enroll'd in the Heavenly.

For, That the Devil has still a Principality in the Earthly City, (call'd the World,) we learn from *Eph. 6. 12.* where our Christian Warfare is call'd *Wrestling with Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darkness of this World.* Satan then, does yet (with his Ministers,) here prevail, as the World's Ruler; i. e. Over Worldly men, and the Earthly City; which is the World, meant *1. Joh. 5. 19.* that *Lies in Wickedness*; and the Body Join'd to this cursed Head, the Evil One, who has it much in his Power.

Again, The Citizens of the Heavenly City, are the Blessed that Reign Above: and

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and also such as (in the mortal Body,) do yet Inhabit this Earth ; But (in Heart,) have their *Conversation in Heaven* : and Long for nothing more than to *Escape* hence , and be with their Glorious Head, the King of the City above. Yet because the Citizens of Heaven are here *Intermixt* with those of the Earth, Therefore are they said to be *in the World*, Tho' not of the *World*. They are in it , but as *Foreigners*. 1 Pet. 2. 11. While the *Strangers* to the Covenants of Promise , that *Live without God in the World*, Eph. 2. 12. Here they do fix , as *Inhabitants* , at their Home.

Let none then so deceive himself, as to think that he can be at once a Citizen of this *World* , and of *Heaven*. For the *World's* Citizens are of the *World* : The *Heavenly* Citizens are not of it , Tho' they be in it. To be of the *World*, and not of the *World* , then, are such *Opposites* , as cannot meet in the same Subject. They therefore that give their Minds and Hearts to the *World* and *Earthly* things, must not flatter 'emselves with *Hopes* of any place in the *Heavenly* City ; Till they so break off from the *World* , as to *Disclaim* it , and grow out of *Conceit* with it , and even set themselves against it.

And

And because these are such great things, as few do Understand, or so much as *Think* of; That none therefore may plead Ignorance herein at the Last-day, What do the holy Scriptures more frequently *Inculcate*? *Joh. 17. 14. They are not of the World, even as I am not of the World. And Chap. 15. 19. If ye were of the World, the World would Love his own: But because ye are not of the World, but I have Chosen you out of the World; therefore the World hates you. I Cor. 1. 20. God has made Foolish the Wisdom of this World. (Where in thinking to Get all, they Lose all.) Jam. 4. 4. Know ye not, that the Friendship of the World is Enmity with God? 2 Pet. 1. 4. We are Partakers of the Divine Nature; Having escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro' Lust. 1 Joh. 2. 15. If any man Love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him. Joh. 17. 9. I Pray not for the World; but for them which thou hast given me out of the World.*

So is this World, q. Excommunicated from God, That the Saviour himself would not Pray for it. Not for the Reprobate part, saith *S. Aug.* that are *Destin'd to Condemnation. 1 Cor. 11. 32. Or not for the World, So as for his Members, whom he had Saved from it. For the World was in no Disposition for such Blessings, as our Lord ask'd for these; (even to be with him,*
where

where he was, and to behold the Glory, that was Given him : Job. 17. 24.) any more than one dawb'd o're with Dirt and Dung is fit for a King's Bed-chamber. Yet did he Pray even for his Crucifiers : That they might be Pardoned and Purged, and fetch'd out of the World, to be Saved from it.

So that, 'Tis not for the World he Prays, but for such as get out of the World ; which all must do , before they get out of the Body ; Or else they will not get into the Heavenly City. There must be the Weaning and Divorce from this World, and its Lusts ; before Death come to Tear us away from hence, : So must we be Converted and Renewed , as not to set our Affection on things upon Earth. Yea , so Mind and Seek , and Admire the things Above , as to Despise and Scorn all else, that we may Win and Secure 'em : And to protest, with that fervent Lover, Psal. 137. 5, 6. *If I forget thee O Jerusalem, Let my right Hand forget her Cunning : If I do not remember thee , Let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my mouth : If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief Joy.* This is the true badge of a heavenly Denizen ; That will chuse rather to Lose Hand and Tongue, than ever Do or Say any thing against the Love of his dearest Lord , and his blessed Countrey above : And Post-pones
all

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all the Joys upon Earth, to that Bliss, which gives *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*, to all the Citizens of Heaven: Yea, Loath every thing, that here would come in Competition: And, as long as under the present *Exile*, can find nothing that so *Exbilarates* and cheers the Mind, as to Remember and Consider, to Expect and Desire what's to be for ever Enjoyed at the Glorious End.

Now, for the Close of this Part, Let me confirm what I have here said, with a greater Authority than my own; even that of *S. Aug.* on *Psal.* 62. *All that Savour the things on Earth; All that prefer an Earthly Felicity above the Lord; All that Seek their Own, not the things of Jesus Christ, belong to the City call'd Mystery-Babylon, and have the Devil for their King. But all who Savour the things Above, who Meditate what's Heavenly, who Live in this World, with Careful hearts, Least they should offend God; who are afraid to Sin, and when they Sin, Not asham'd to Confess and Repent; The Humble, the Meek, Holy, Just, Devout and Good, do all belong to the City Above, which has Christ the Lord himself for its Glorious Head.*

The

The Third Book

*Of the Saints Eternal Felicity ;
Under the Title of*

The LORD's HOUSE.

C H A P. I.

All the Blessed are God's Domesticks.



*Was Glad, when they said
to me, Let us go into the
House of the Lord. Psal.
122. 1. Truly great
and unspeakable cause
of Rejoicing has the
good and faithful Ser-
vant ; When, after he
has bestowed his pains in the Vineyard,
or in Trading to Improve the Talents, or
in Running to Win the Prize, or in
Fighting to get the Crown, or in duly
Feeding the Sheep, and stoutly defending
'em from the Wolves ; He is call'd to come
take*

take his Ease, and Refresh himself in the *House of his Lord*.

But why call we that a *House* now, which before we call'd a *City*? Sure 'tis not, because it is so Narrow, as not to deserve the former Name; when of so wide Dimensions, that no *City* or *Kingdom* can ever exceed it. *Bar. 3. 24, 5. O Israel, how Great is the House of God? and how Large the Place of his Possession? Great, and hath no End: High, and unmeasurable.* Why then is not so Capacious a *House* still call'd a *City*?

The *first* Reason may be, Because the Blessed, Tho' spread all over the *Kingdom of Heaven*, are yet all of 'em the Lord's *Domesticks*, and Familiar Friends. Some might Imagine, If mention had been made only of a *Kingdom* or *City*, That there might be many in the *Kingdom of Heaven* and the *City of God*, who should never attain to the *Blessing of Seeing the Lord*; Unless peculiarly befriended by some eminent *Courtiers Above*. But because it's no such matter; And all there do ever *See God*, and *Converse with him*, and *Speak face to face*: All are *Fellow-citizens*, and of his *Household*, *Eph. 2. 19.* Therefore is it called not only a *City*, but a *House*; Where all *Co-habit* together, all *Correspond* with one another.

Many

Many, it's true, are the Mansions in that House, Greater and Less; and divers sorts of Crowns, some Brighter than other. But all the Citizens are (to their wishes,) Happy and Blessed; Pure in Heart, and full of Love. And none there, but as a Friend, *Sees* and *Enjoys* his God. Tho' in other Kingdoms and Cities, there are Multitudes that seldom or never See or Speak to their *King*, or have any *Inter-course* with him; Yet in the Kingdom and City of God, it is so much otherwise, that the Privilege and Favour there lies in *Common*.

A *Second* Reason of the Appellation may be, Because many who elsewhere have the Sight of their *King*, and are admitted to Speech with him, Yet are none of his *Sons* and *Heirs*. Whereas *all* the Souls in Heaven, higher or lower, are the *Children of God*, and *Brethren of Christ*. Yea, *Heirs of God*, and *Joynt-heirs with Christ*; And consequently, all Brethren among themselves, and such dear Affectionate Brethren, that the Less is never *Despis'd* of the Greater; Nor do they ever *Stomach* or *Envy* one another. No, 'Tis among 'em all still, *Our Father which art in Heaven*: And without distinction, 'Tis *Come ye Blessed of my Father. Mat. 25. 34. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. Rom. 8. 14.* None
Exclu-

Excluded: But all of 'em *Born again, to an Inheritance Incorruptible, Undeiled, and that fadeth not away, in the Heavens.* 1 Pet. 1.

4. There do they most sweetly Experience, *how good and pleasant it is, for Brethren to dwell together in Unity.* Psal. 133.

1. For what can be imagined so sweet and *Delectable*, as to Converse with Innumerable Angels, and Great men, and Equals, and Inferiors; and to be treated as a *Brother*, To be most kindly Used, and cordially Loved, as a *Brother*, by all and every one of 'em for ever?

C H A P. II.

Of the Greatness and Beauty of God's House.

ANother Reason, why the Saints Habitation is call'd a *House*, may be for the many Ornaments which Houses (especially those of Kings,) have, in the Halls, Parlours, Bed-chambers, and other *Apartments*: For who can enumerate all the Rich *Furniture*, the Arras, Tapistry, precious Robes, stately Beds, the wonderful Paintings and Carvings, and all the Silver and Gold Vessels, wherewith the Palaces of Princes shine and glitter? Nor only

only are the Ornaments and Utensils within so Costly ; But the outward Structure , the Variety of Marbles , Pillars, Statues, Fountains, Courts, Gardens, Walks, Houses of Pleasure, all ready to entertain You with a delightful *Surprize* and Admiration.

King *Solomon*, after he had erected that most magnificent *Temple* to the Lord , which was truly the *Wonder of the World*, Set up a House also for himself, with such an *Apparade* , that it was Thirteen years in Building : Tho' he had very many Officers and Over-seers of the Work, for *Expedition* ; and the Materials also of fine *Marble-stone* , and the choicest Timber of *Cedar* , all at hand. Nor with Less ado and *Charge* , did he build a Palace for his *Egyptian Queen* : and the House of the Forest of *Libanus* ; the description of which might be thought *Incredible* , did we find it any where but in the Writings *Infallible*. 1 *King*. 7. When therefore holy Scripture calls the City and Kingdom of God a *House* ; 'Twould have us Imagine such a Kingdom and City , as shines and dazzles and ravishes the Spectators , like the most splendid *Palace of a King*. And how Amazing would that be , To see a whole Kingdom shine like its chief City ; and a whole City , like the most Rich and beautiful *House* ! Who then is not

astonish'd to consider the whole ev'n boundless Kingdom of Heaven, deck't and Adorn'd, as one most Lovely and precious *House of God*? Well might the Prophet cry, *Psal. 84. 2. My Soul Longeth, Yea even Fainteth for the Courts of the Lord.* For who would not Covet with all his Soul, to See and Possess such a Royal House, as (in dimensions,) *Equals a whole Kingdom*? And to see and Inherit the widest of all Kingdoms, that (in Magnificence, Ornaments, and Beauty,) may Vye with any King's most glorious *Palace*? Our Soul would not only Long, but ev'n be Rapt out of it self, for such a House, and such a Kingdom; did we but indeed Believe, and well Consider it. 'For look upon all the most celebrated Palaces of Nobles, and Courts of Kings upon Earth, with the whole of their richest Goods, and finest Adornments, Yet O what very course Stuff would they appear, compar'd with any the least Mansion in the House of God!

But we, alas, Grovelling here on the Ground, and all addicted to things *Below*, Admire what we see on Earth; and scarce Think of what's *Invisible*; Tho' the *Greatest* and the *Best* of all. As Children, that were never out of their Fathers poor Huts, have no *Notion* or Apprehension of *Kings Courts*: And as *Rusticks*, that never saw

saw a gallant *City*, are intent upon Cultivating their narrow bits of Ground, and patching up the Mud-walls and Thatch'd Roofs of their little *Cotts*; And trouble not their heads, about the Palaces, Towers, Courts, Theatres, Treasures, Dignities and Entertainments of *Princes*. And (it may be) those little Children, and those poor Rusticks are happier than some of the high *Grandees* and mighty *Princes* of this World: Because the things that appear so *Big* and Inviting here upon Earth, may indeed bring more Trouble and *Peril*, than solid *Worth* and Advantage, along with'em. But the Goods in the Heavenly House of God our Father, are really the Greatest: and bring neither any Cumber nor Danger; but do perfectly free from both; and not only for some little while, but for ever. Therefore *S. Paul*, that was neither *Child*, nor *Rustick*, but *Scholar* enough, to know all this World's Good; And had not only been Conversant with Wise men, but Taken up into the *House of God*, Speaks even of all the best things in this World to be seen, as not worth a Cast of his eyes. 2 Cor. 4. last Ver. *While we Look not at the things which are Seen; but at the things which are not Seen: &c.* And *Phil. 3. 20.* *Our Conversation is in Heaven.* Whither he directs us all. Col. 3. 1, 2. *Seek those things*
F 2 *which*

which are Above, where Christ sitteth at the Right hand of God. Set your Affection on things Above, not on things upon the Earth.

[C H A P. III.]

Of the Dining-Room of the House of God.

YET a further Reason; why the City and Kingdom of God are call'd his House, is taken from the Words of our Lord, *Joh. 14. 2. In my Father's House are many Mansions.* For as in great Houses, there are the *Dining-Rooms*, for Entertainments, the *Bed-chambers* for Lodging, and the *Halls* for many Occasions, not so fit to be Transacted out of doors; So in the House of God there is

I. The Dining-Room; where all the Saints are Entertain'd at the King of Heaven's Table. And that which is most strange, and would not have been Credible, If himself had not told it, *Luk. 12. 37. The Lord, that shall Gird himself, and make the Servants, whom he finds Watching at his Coming, sit down to Meat, (He himself) will come forth and Serve*

Serve them. Who ever heard the Like ? The Lord, to *Stand*, and the Servants *Sit down* ! They to *Eat*, and he to *Wait* ! O did we but *Comprehend* and ponder this, How much below us should we count all manner of *Earthly desires* ? Peter was under a Confusion ; *Joh. 13. 6.* Lord, dost thou stoop so to *Attend* upon me ? He could not bear the Thought of any such thing : When he saw such *Humbling* of Majesty ; To give his Servants that most Amazing Demonstration and Pattern of *Humility*.

But in the Heavenly City , This Ministration will not be any such Low *Abasement* : For there , the Servants of God will need no Example of *Humility*, where none shall be *Proud* : None shall be *Defective* in any Grace or Virtue. Therefore the Lord's *Girding* and *Serving* does only signify to us most sweetly , How *Expedite* and Ready he will be , to heap all his Goods and Joys upon his Brethren and Servants : And so *Lend and Give* himself to Pleasure and Refresh 'em ; as if he had nothing else to do , but to *Communicate* and Impart his Infinite Goodness and Sweetness to *Every one* , even wholly ; As if it were to that particular Saint only.

O *Christian Soul!* what is this that thou hearest? Wilt thou be so Wise, as to Understand and Admire, what Honour, what Pleasure the Lord of all will *Accumulate* on his Servants for ever? Did this but go down to the bottom of thy *Heart*, Be sure, thou wouldst be *Fervent in Spirit*, and Gird thy Loyns, to give Thy self wholly and most Gladly to the Service of so *sweet* a Lord: And never Look awry upon a Poor *Brother* neither; Nor disdain even the *Lowest* Office, to Relieve his Misery, and Refresh his Bowels, with thy kind *Charity*. Especially, when thy Lord has said, That he will take it, *as done to Himself*. *Mat. 25. 40.*

Yet further; His making the Servants *Sit down*, Teaches us, That such as are Admitted into the House of their *Father*, are *Safe*, and quite above the reach of any *Danger*. Where they may take their *Ease*, free from all manner of *Fear*; and Refresh themselves with all the *Goods*, whereof that House is so full, as ever to *Abound*: And none (by Surprise or Force) ever to come there, and spoil or *Interrupt* 'em.

In fine; What means the Lord's *Ministring* to 'em, but that all their sweet Entertainments are *Treasur'd* up in *Himself*? And he is the *Bread* of Life, and the *Fountain* of Wisdom and Pleasure. He is
the

the *bidden Manna*, which no one knows, but he that has it. Therefore does he Apply himself to each *Individual*, to every One in particular. And out of his own infinite *Fulness* and *Goodness*, ministers to 'em all, the unspeakable Dainties and Delights, which will Satisfy without Loathing, and Fill without Cloying, and most sweetly Please always, without ever tiring or Wearying.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Bed-chamber of God's House.

PAss we on from the Dining-Room to the Bed-chamber, Ministering yet further *Pleasure*; According to *Psal.* 149. 5. *Let the Saints be Joyful in Glory; Let them Sing aloud upon their Beds.* And what mean these Beds, but the most perfect *Rest* of God's Saints? And the sweet *Sleep* that he gives his Beloved; *Psal.* 127. 2. What is it, but the full Discharge from all their Labours? *Rev.* 14. 15. A compleat Freedom from all that should ever *Weary* or *Disturb* 'em? Which, O how great a Good; Peculiar only to the Blessed above! For in this Life, none is at *Rest*. No; Even

Even the *Noble* and the *Rich*, whom some might imagine to be sure of it, are most commonly some of the furthest from it. And none more liable to *Lose* it; Because none less able to *Bear* any Pressures upon 'em, that come to Try 'em. None Lye more Open, as the widest *Mark* to be hit: None more ready, when Touch'd, to Cry out. ' Not without cause therefore did ' our Lord compare Riches to *Thorns*. ' *Mat.* 13. 22. Not only for Choaking the ' *Word*, which should Save the Soul; But ' also for *Piercing* the very *Flesh*, which ' they are fancied the most sovereign *Antidotes*, to Ease and Please. So much ' *Cumber* about 'em, and such frequent ' *Disappointments* from 'em; Yea, so many ' *Cases*, in which they can do no manner of *Good*; and as many, in which ' they do a great deal of *hurt*; That he ' who had the Largest *Experience* of 'em, ' cry'd out, Nothing but *Vanity and Vexation* in 'em. *Eccles.* 2. 11. And with all ' that ever he had, no *Rest* under the Sun ' could he find. *Man is born to Trouble*; said that man of Sorrows, *Job*: Chap. 5. 7.

But most copious upon this Subject is the Son of *Syrach*, *Eccclus.* 40. begin. Great *Travel* is created for every man: and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of *Adam*; From the day that they go out of their mothers womb, till the

the day that they return to the mother of all things. The Imagination of things to come, and the day of Death trouble their thoughts, and cause Fear of heart. From him that sits on a Throne of Glory, unto him that is humbled in the earth and ashes; from him that weareth Purple and a Crown, to him that is clothed with a Linnen Frock;— Little or nothing is his Rest; and he is disquieted in his very Sleep. Such things happen to all Flesh. But 'tis seven-fold more upon Sinners.

' Some can Weary and Disease themselves with their very Recreations; Hunting and Playing, and seeking Pleasure; and then break off complaining, Quite Tyr'd out! Sick of the Sport, and know not what to do with themselves. Nay, while they are fancied so much above other men, They come behind the very Beasts. As by their longer Sight, fetching in more Frights; and from Looking out to the Future, filling themselves with nothing but Uneasiness for the present. And while the Labouring Beasts are Eas'd of the Yoke at Night, These carry their Yokes with 'em to Bed; and there find the tormenting Ghost haunt their very Pillows; either quite to drive away, or very much to Interrupt and break their Rest. And when nothing else falls Cross, Yet even all their Life, they are in Bondage thro' fear of Death. Hebr. 2. 15.

But the saddest Plague of all to them that set not themselves to *seek* the Heavenly House, is that they must bear for ever yet a far more grievous *Yoke*, than any was upon 'em in this Life. For tho' here, none is free from Trouble, Yet have all some *Ease* intermixt: But in *Hell* will be the forest Weight and *Grief*, without any Intermiſſion or *Relief*.
 ' Only in the blessed House of God,
 ' *there remains a Rest to the people of God.*
 ' *Heb. 4. 9.* Where they do not *Ease*
 ' themselves, (as here,) by *Sleep*, only
 ' to Forget their Sorrows; but *Sing on*
 ' *their Beds*: As knowing and feeling,
 with Eternal Thanksgiving, the blessed
Good of that most joyful *Rest* from all
 Labour, Dolour, Fear, Sin, or any
 thing else whatsoever, any more to Dis-
 turb 'em. 'Tis not then, Falling into an
 eternal *Apathy* and *Sleep*; But the Eter-
 nal Enjoyment of most perfect *Ease* and
Peace.

And were it nothing but *Everlasting Rest*, Yet O how well worth the Purchasing, even with all the Labours and Troubles of this present Life! And were there no other Torment in *Hell*, but the *perpetual Watching*, without any manner of *Sleep and Rest*; Yet were it not cheaply Redeem'd and bought off, even with all
 the

the daily and nightly *Prayers* and *Tears*, that could be pour'd out in this whole *Life*? For as sweet as it will be to the *Saints*, to find an *End* of all their *Labours* and *Sorrows*; So bitter will it be to the *Wicked*, in the same *Exit*, To find that their *Labours* and *Sorrows* will never have an *End*. Death is call'd the *Last of all Terribles*: And because it seems to bring some kind of *Rest*, The miserable that are cast into *Hell* shall seek *Death* it self; for some kind of *Relief* expected by it; But they shall not find it: and desire to *Dye*; but it shall be far from 'em. *Rev.* 9. 6. Therefore shall the want of *Rest* be counted a greater *Evil*, even than the *Last of Terribles*. Yet, O the stupid and deplorable *Blindness* of *Mortals* in this *World*, That even for *Nothing*, They will Lose *everlasting Rest*; and go down to the *Place*, where their *Torment* will admit of no manner of *Rest*!

C H A P. V.

Of the Hall of God's House.

THere remains to be consider'd the *Hall*, that place in the House, which is design'd for Variety of *Occasions*. But in this blessed House, There will be One only *Business*, common to all; Which is, to *Praise* the most High and Eternal King and Lord of all. With us here, Some are Employed in getting Money, some in getting Dignity: Some to get Learning, that they may Know, and Teach others: And some to get and follow Trades, that they may Subsist, and Help themselves. But in the Land of the truly *Living* and Immortal, There will be no Want or Ignorance, no Pride, or Aspiring after further Pre-eminence. For all there will be most highly *Pleas'd* with their present State; and never *wish* any more at all, than what they *have*. They'll be all most sweetly Taken up in *Enjoying*, *Loving*, and *Praising* the Chiefest Good Everlasting.

But does any shrink at the Office, To hear of Praising God, in *Psalms* and *Hymns*; as not to be discharged, without some Labour and *Weariness*? Let'em
know

know and consider, That what is a *Work*, in the present Life, will be nothing but *Reward* in the Life to come. What may sometimes here seem *Tedious*, will there be evermore the most *Joyous*. Now it may give *Uneasiness*, to go over some things in the Religious Offices, that are not well *Understood*. And it may cost no small Pains sometimes, to drive away *Vain Thoughts*, as noisom Flies. Nor can the Corruptible Body Long wait upon the Heavenly Soul, and not be sensible of the *Fatigue*. But in that blessed Countrey, the Body will be *Spiritual* and Immortal: All *impertinent* Thoughts too will there for ever be gone: We shall perfectly *Understand* all that we Sing: And, which is more than all this, The Praising of God will be nothing else but the Exercising, and Using, and Feeling of our own *Happiness*. So that if *Eternal Felicity* will not be Troublesome, Neither will the Praising of God be so. But that there will be in Heaven this Praising of God, as the Exercise of Bliss, We may Learn from *Psal. 84. 4.* *Blessed are they that dwell in thy House; They will be still Praising thee.* For as it is a part of Blessedness still to See and Love the Chief Good; So 'tis an Exercise of the Blessedness, still to Praise it. And as none shall be Tir'd in Loving, so neither in Praising the Lord. Neither
in

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in Seeing and Praising of his *Works*, still before their Eyes, and still Charming their Sight. And then, how can we Praise the Works, without Praising him that Made 'em? Finally; As we can never forget the precious *Benefits*, where-with our Father sweetly Overwhelms us, and with so many dear *Tyes* of Love (never to be Loosed,) has Oblig'd us to Himself; So we cannot chuse, but with the most Grateful Minds, ever *Triumph* in the Glorious Praises of our best and highest Benefactor, our dearest Friend and Father, our only full and Satisfying Good, Blessed for ever.

Let *S. Aug.* end this, *What else*, (says he) shall be done, *Where we shall neither give o're for Sloth; nor be at a Loss, for Want? God himself will be the End of our Desires; Who, without End will be Seen, without Cloying will be Loved, without Weariness be Praised. This Office, this Affection, this Action, (like Eternal Life it self,) will be in common to all; For there we shall Rest and See, See and Love, Love and Praise. Behold here, What shall be the End, without any End. For what else is our End, but to Arrive at that Blessed Kingdom, whereof shall be no End?*

C H A P. VI.

*Of Faith, the first part of the Gate of
God's House.*

THese things so far opened, It remains now, that we enquire after the Gate, thro' which we may Enter into that most Happy House of God. And our Lord himself has not only shew'd us the Gate; but also acquainted us, that it is *strait*; and that we must *Strive to Enter*. *Luk. 13. 24, 5.* Being asked, *Lord, are there Few that be Saved?* He answer'd, *Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate. For many, I say unto you, will Seek to Enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the House is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, Saying, Lord, Lord, Open to us; And he shall answer and say to you, I know you not, whence you are.*

Be the House then never so Large, Yet the Gate appears to be *Strait*: And by reason of that *Straitness*, many who have a mind to it, Yet will not Enter in at it. They may *Wish and Desire*; But the *Striving* they will not *Endure*.

Now

Now let us explain the Matter, How the Gate, Leading to so Wide a House, comes to be so *Strait*. This Gate then, (you must know,) has Four parts; a *Threshold*, a *Lintell*, and two *Side-Stones*; which you are to take for so many divine *Virtues*, most necessary to be possess'd by every one that will Enter the heavenly House of God. And what are these *Virtues*, but *Faith*, *Hope*, *Charity*, and *Humility*? *Faith* and *Hope* are the *Side-stones*, *Charity* is the *Lintell*, and *Humility* the *Threshold*. But all these *Virtues* have so little *Longitude* and *Latitude*, that being *Strait* in themselves, They make *Strait* the Gate, in like manner.

To begin with *Faith*. Such Straits has the true Christian *Faith*, that unless a man's Mind offers a kind of *Violence* to it self, and suffers such a *Captivity*, as to be bound and Thrust up; None can Enter by it. After this manner speaks one, that well understood the matter; 2 Cor. 10. 5. *Bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ*. For many things does the Christian doctrine propound to be *Believed*, which are so much above Human Reason, That we cannot, without great Difficulty, *Assent* to 'em: And Yet commands 'em so firmly to be *Owned* and *Held*; That *Blood* and *Life* must be
Yielded

Yielded up ; rather than any part of this Faith ever be Denied. Therefore *Turks* and *Infidels* , who cannot surmount these *Difficulties* , take 'em quite away , and throw the Gate *Wide open* : But so Extended, Leading only to *Destruction* ; and not to Life everlasting.

Every man naturally desires to *Know* : and he will not easily Assent ; unless you give him a *Demonstration* , or some very probable *Reason*. This the Apostle found ; who, tho' he spake miraculously , out of an *Infused* , as well as *Acquired Learning*, and the Gift of *Tongues* ; Yet when he preached *Jesus and the Resurrection*, There wanted not Scholars and *Academics* , and fine Wits of the Age , that Derided him, and askt *what the Babbler would Say ?* *Act.* 17. 18. And when he preach'd *Christ Crucified*, He tells us, *1 Cor. 1. 23.* 'Twas to the *Jews a Stumbling-block* , and to the *Greeks* no better than *Foolishness*. Hence did the old *Hereticks* take occasion to open the Gate so *Wide*, as to let in thereat all their wild *Errors* ; Those of *Sabelians*, *Arrians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, &c. ' And of Late , have thrust in some of ' the same *Stuffing* , new drest by their ' *Apes*, our *Deists* and *Socinians*.

' But yet, I hope they must not fall under this *Condemnation of Heresy* , who ' refuse to receive for *Doctrines*, the Tra- ' ditions

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'ditions and Inventions of men ; For
 'which we have not a word of Command
 'in the Gospel of our Lord. Such as,
 'To make and keep *Monastic Vows* ; To
 'be bound under pain of damnation, to
 'Confess to a *Priest* ; To make *Satisfaction*
 'for our Sins ; and to Merit Heaven by
 'our good Works ; And, (which is the most
 'choaking of all,) To believe that a Bit of
 'Bread is real God ; and to swallow all
 'those monstrous Opinions of *Transubstan-*
 '*tiation*, which carry the most absurd and
 'Horrid Contradiction. Nor dare we
 'impeach the chief Apostle for a *Heretic*,
 'Because he taught, that we are *Justified*
 'by *Faith*. Rom. V. 1. and are of *them that*
 '*Believe to the Saving of the Soul*. Heb. 10.
 'last Ver. Much less, dare we controul our
 'great Lord himself, when he says, *This is*
 '*the Will of God, that every one who Be-*
 '*lieveth on the Son may have everlasting*
 '*Life*. *Joh. 6. 40.*

'But for good Works, Tho' we dare not
 'challenge Heaven for 'em, nor build our
 'Salvation upon 'em ; Yet neither dare
 'we Omit 'em, nor make account to be
 'Saved without 'em ; Nor by any Faith,
 'but what is to be demonstrated by 'em.
 'Let it then be Condemn'd for Heresy
 'and lewd Liberty, That *only Faith* is
 'needful to Salvation ; and that no Works
 'can Help, nor any Sins hinder our En-
 'trance.

‘trance. For we do believe and Confess
‘our selves, to be under the strictest Oblig-
‘ation still to take Care, and make Con-
‘science of Good Works: And let every
‘one that names the name of Christ depart from
‘Iniquity: and Live Godly, Righteously and
‘Soberly. Because, of whatever Denomi-
‘nation they be, who profess to Know God,
‘and in deeds deny him, Their Enlarging
‘of the Gate, will never help ’em into
‘Heaven: But we must take it, as our
‘Lord has made it; and Believe *all his pre-*
‘cepts to be right: And where we find not
‘our duty Easy, we must strive to con-
‘quer the Difficulty. And yet after all,
‘when we have done our Best, we will
‘not make our Boast; But expect to be
‘Saved only by Grace through Faith: And
‘most humbly and thankfully accept Eter-
‘nal Life, as the free Gift of God, through
‘Jesus Christ our Lord.

C H A P. VII.

*Of Hope, another part of the Gate of
God's House.*

That Hope also has its Straits, we shall
find; Whether we consider the Riches
of the Reward, or the Poverty of our own
State.

State. For should you bid an Illiterate *Plebeian*, that has no Experience of humane Affairs, Hope, shortly to have the Learning of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, and the Empire of *Alexander* or *Augustus*; Could you persuade him, that you did any more than Mock him? And yet that's an *Easier* Attainment, than for a Mortal man to arrive at the Wisdom, Power, and Glory of the blessed *Angels* in Heaven. For the *Plebeian* is of the very same nature with *Alexander* and *Aristotle*, who were both Mortal men. And the Wisdom of the one did not exceed the Measures of a Man: And the Conquest of the other (tho' call'd the *World*,) did not reach to a *Third* part of the Earth.

But the *Hope* of Believers Emboldens 'em to look for even an *Equality with the Angels of God*, Luk. 20. 36. Which is more than for one that goes creeping here on the ground, to be Enabled presently to Ascend, and fly up and down, whither he will, in the *Air*. For it is, even with his Body, to get above the Heavens, and strait-way back again to the *Earth*; and in his course from East to West, or whithersoever he has a mind, To outstrip any *Star* or *Planet*, in their swiftest Motions.

Yet further, should you bid a poor Boy, the Orphan of beggerly Parents, Hope to be made the *Heir* of a mighty King, one that he knows not; What would he not do, if
it

it were Possible for him, ever to be so Exalted? Yet as vast as ever sounds the Disparity here, still the King and the Beggar both are Earth's Children; and they must Dye alike. But the Christian Faith assures us, That every man, (tho' never so Low in the World,) Believing in our Lord, and made a Living Member of Christ, receives the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he is made also a Son and Heir of Heaven: and shall certainly be possessed of all that Kingdom and Glory everlasting.

So great and High is this Hope, that were it but held and Believ'd as it ought, 'T would make Christians as Fearless as Lions, and never tremble at any Dangers: But say with that Believer, Psal. 118. 6. *The Lord is on my side: I will not fear what man can do to me.* And Psal. 27. 3. *Tho' an Host should encamp against me, my heart shall not Fear.* And with the Apostle, Rom. 8. 31. *If God be for us, who can be against us?* And Phil. 4. 13. *I can do all things, thro' Christ strengthening me.*

But O how few do indeed Hope for such High Eternal things; when, alas, they cannot bring themselves to Depend upon God, even for the poor Temporal matters? But Trust to their Craft and their Fraud, and Lying and Stealing, to help themselves. Our Lord has finely check'd and twitted such kind of Christians, as perplex themselves

selves with an *Anxious Solitude* for Food and Rayment, *Mat. 6.* Where he puts 'em in Mind, How God provides even for the Birds, that neither *Sow* nor *Reap*, nor *Lay up*; And how he *beautifies* the *Lilies*, (or *Tulips*,) that *neither Toyl* nor *Spin*. And when 'tis their *Father's good Pleasure* to give 'em the *Kingdom*, How do they *Hope* it, that can fly to *Knarish* shifts, if not to *Diabolical Arts*, even for the poorest Advantages of this World?

But there are yet greater *Straits* in this *Hope*, when it obliges us, (in Prospect of the *Unseen* Eternal things,) so to despise the present Temporal *Goods*, as to scatter 'em abroad among the *Poor*, that we may find 'em again, *Multiply'd* in Heaven; after we have thus *Sowed* upon Earth. The Husbandman will indeed, easily give *Credit* to the Ground, that he shall *Reap* with Joy, the Wheat which there he *Sows*, with much Expence and Pains: Because he has the *Experience* of so many Years to *Corroborate* his Hopes. But we have no such *Experience*, to assure us, That what we sow among the *Poor*, we shall gather it, with the most happy Increase in Heaven. Therefore, is it so hard for Men to let go the Present things, in Expectation of those to come, which are *Unseen*.

Once

Once more, does it not argue this Gate of *Hope* and Trust in God, to be very *strait*, when we see every where so many of the Wretched, Crying, Weeping, Blaspheming, Despairing *Creatures*, all over this World? For as to them who *Hope* in him, God either *Removes* their Miseries, or *Supports* their Spirits, and bears 'em up under the *Pressure*, with so much Patience and Comfort, that they can say, like the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 4. *I am fill'd with Consolation: I am exceeding Joyful in all our Tribulation.* But the frequent *Out-cries* and even *Ravings*, that we use to hear, in such cases, give too sad a Proof, How few (in Heart and Truth) do *Hope* in God: How many soever may have those words in their Mouth, *Psal. 46. 1. God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in Trouble.*

C H A P. VIII.

Of Charity, the Third part of the Gate.

TH E Lintel of the Heavenly Gate is that *Charity*, which is the Queen of Virtues; And on the one Side, appears exceeding Wide, as extended to God and Angels, and all Men, even the Unknown, and

and very Enemies: Yet on the other side,
 'Twill be found much *Straiter*, when we
 see its Commands, 1 *Joh.* 3. 18. *To Love,*
not in Word and in Tongue; but in deed and in
Truth. And *Luk.* 10. 27. *To Love the Lord*
our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul,
with all our Mind, and with all our Strength:
 To what Straits does it reduce us, When it
 must not be only Sincere and undissembled,
 but *Fervent* and *Transcendent* Love? Loving
 our Supream Good, Before and Above all;
 To the Exclusion and Contempt of every
 thing else, that would come in Competition.
 To make us Ready, Prepar'd, and Resolv'd,
 to let go Friends, and Goods, and Ease,
 and Life, whatsoever is dearest to us in the
 World, for his Sake: That we may Cleave
 to the Lord our God! O how *Strait* is that
 Gate, and to get through it, how *hard* will
 a man be put to it!

Then, for the Love of our *Neighbour*, It
 must be even *as we Love our selves*: And as
 we would be done by, just so to Use them:
 Now, who that is *Indigent* and in Streights,
 does not desire some Help and *Supply* out of
 his Rich Neighbour's Superfluity? Tho'
 the Wealthy man may plead, That he has
 run himself in Debt, with Purchasing or
 Building, or some extraordinary *Expences*;
 It may be, more than was need, and but to
 sorry Purposes. And then Charity will
 never endure, That the Poor distressed
 Neigh-

Neighbour should be ready to Starve, for want of *Necessaries* : When the Great man next him, has so much to throw away upon his *Pleasures*, his *Fancies*, and *Extravagancies*. O what account will he be able to give of his *Stewardship*, that is for laying out, not according to his Lord's Will and Command ; but according to his own humour and Lust ? If for every *Idle Word*, much more for every *Idle Expence* shall men give account in the day of Judgment.

And among all other *Debts*, O where are men so slack and Tardy, as in paying that which God has made their Debt to the Poor and needy ? Yet what becomes of all their Pretensions to the Love of God, who have not Open hearts to their Poor brethren ? 1 *Joh. 3. 17. Who so hath this World's Good, and sees his Brother have need, and shuts up his Bowels of Compassion from him, How dwelleth the Love of God in him ?* And Chap. 4. 20. *He that Loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, How can he Love God, whom he hath not seen ?* And how would he lay down his Life, that will not lay down so much as his Pence for the Brethren ? 1 *Joh. 3. 16. For what's the Pelf, compar'd with the Life ? But hardly shall the Rich Enter ; Because they will not Part with that which does binder : Nor do Good, in being ready to Distribute, and rich in Good works ; as not daring to*

‘ Trust the Lord, in Lending to him, by
 ‘ Giving to his Poor. And thus they bar
 ‘ up the Door against themselves, because
 ‘ they will no more Open their hands to
 ‘ others.

‘ O this, this is the *one thing Lacking*, in
 ‘ some that seem otherwise not only passa-
 ‘ ble, but very commendable. The Rich
 ‘ man’s great Possessions are the Camel’s
 ‘ bunch, where it sticks with so many, that
 ‘ they cannot Enter, to have *Treasure in*
 ‘ *Heaven*. Or their *Tenacious Humour*, and
 ‘ *Trusting in their Riches* it is, which twists
 ‘ up the Cable, that will not go through
 ‘ the *Needle’s eye*. Mat. 19. 21, 2, 3, 4. This
 ‘ makes ’em break with the only Saviour,
 ‘ though at the same time, sorrowful to
 ‘ Lose his great Salvation.

‘ And therefore, that of the Apostle, *1 Tim.*
 ‘ 6. 17. is a very friendly Admonition,
 ‘ (O that it found better Reception!) when
 ‘ he bids, *Charge them which are Rich in this*
 ‘ *World, that they Trust not in uncertain Riches.*
 ‘ For ’tis not having the World’s fulness, that
 ‘ undoes ’em; Seeing there are very Wealth-
 ‘ thy great men, who are also very Godly
 ‘ and charitable men: and by doing abun-
 ‘ dance of Good in their generation, help
 ‘ to ascertain their own Salvation; and are
 ‘ not only wise to make themselves *Friends*
 ‘ of the unrighteous *Mammon*, but instru-
 ‘ mental also to help others into Heaven.

‘ Yet

‘ Yet such as do set their *Hearts* upon it ;
‘ thus do make to themselves a *Curse* of it.
‘ And when it serves only to feed their
‘ *Avarice* or *Luxury*, Yea, as the *high Wall*
‘ and strong *Garison* , to protect ‘em in their
‘ Cruelty against the Cries of the Needy,
‘ and their Impiety against the Commands
‘ of the Almighty ; This cleaving to their
‘ adored Idol, keeps ‘em from the World’s
‘ Redeemer : And so wrapping themselves
‘ up in their putrid Muck , they are out of
‘ all Fitness for God’s Holy place. Thus
‘ the Riches are kept indeed to their Own-
‘ ers hurt, as well as to the Poors Wrong :
When instead of *Sympathy* and Mercy to
such as are in Necessity and Misery, Con-
sidering and Compassionating their cases,
and reaching out to cloath their Backs and
fill their Bellies, and ease their Grievances ;
rather frowning and rating, taunting and
threatning, racking and oppressing ; to sad-
den their hearts , and Exasperate their
Wounds, and Grind their faces.

And thus *Dives* goes down to be tor-
mented in the Infernal flame ; Because so
hard-hearted to the distressed Beggar. And
he that grudg’d to give a Scrap, when his
own turn comes to Beg, shall not have a
Drop : But find Judgment without Mercy,
because he would shew no Mercy.

And do not some find it as hard to Forgive an Injury, or stoop to an Enemy, as to part with their Money, for Relief of the Needy ? To Love them that hate us, To render Good for Evil, and Overcome their Evil with Good ; O what Hard sayings are these to the most ? Therefore so Few do Enter. And they that are Resolv'd upon it, must strive for it ; and Deny and Streighten themselves, to Pleasure and Benefit others.

C H A P. IX.

Of Humility, the Fourth part of the Gate.

THere remains that *Humility*, which yet wants not its *Straits* and *Difficulty* : Which to Overcome, We must learn of our Lord to be *Meek and Lowly in Heart*. Mat. 11. 29. And go and sit down in the *Lowest Room*, Luk. 14. 10. What he said, he did : When he came into this World, (at his Birth,) Lying in the *Manger* : And when going out of the World, (at his Death,) on the *Cross*. O where could he be *Lower*, Coming in, or Going out ? And in his Life, he was not so well Provided here, even as the

the poorest *Animals* : Not having where to Lay his Head, Mat. 8. 20.

Whoever then, or how Great soever thou art, *Man*, Think thy self fit, for the Lowest place. And for that see a Reason, Gal. 6. 3. *He that thinks himself to be Something, when he is Nothing, deceiveth himself.* Mark : It is not only Poor, or Illiterate, or Ignoble ; but *Nothing*. And what's Below that ? So must he Sink down in his own Thoughts, that would Rise High, and Enter the House of God.

But must there not then be *Princes* and *Prelates*, *Rulers* and *Superiors* in the World, Some *Above* the rest ? 'Tis true ; There must. And yet every one must be for the Lowest Room, and Wait the Lord's call, to come and sit up Higher. Not Thrust into Places, nor Contend for Precedence : Yea, even when set on High, yet be Low in Mind. According to that, Ecclus. 3. 18. *The Greater thou art, the more Humble thyself : And thou shalt find Favour before the Lord.* Be sure, none so Great as they that are Great with God. And with him, the Better are the Greater. And they are the Better, that most Excel in Virtue. For they are not Places, nor Titles, nor Riches, that make men Good, but *Virtues*. And the more *Virtuous*, the Better men. Yea, among Vertues also, That *Humility* has the Precedency, we learn from our

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Lord himself, who makes it the way of Rising to Dignity ; *Mat. 23. 12. He that shall humble himself, shall be Exalted.* So his Apostles, *Jam. 4. 10. Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall Lift you up.* And *1 Pet. 5, 6. Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, that he may Exalt you in due time.* For he is the Judge to put down one, and set up another. And the Distinctions here among Men, will soon be all at an end. But you know not who shall be Higher or Lower For ever. 'Tis best then to sit Lowest, and make thy self even the *Servant of all.*

But, alas, Who follows this Pattern, or observes this Precept of our Lord ? For what do men more struggle, than for *Precedence* in the World ? And what a work have some, to make Peace, between them that are to pieces about Points of *Honour* ? Yea, how can some *Arrogate* to themselves even that of the most High ? *Isa. 42. 8. My Glory will I not give to another.* God only is above the *Virtue of Humility* ; Because nothing is Above Himself. But any man, that counts it *Below* him, does by that means, but *Lose* all the Honour which he aspires after. And makes himself the *Slave* of a very Vain humour. In such striving to be thought Some-body, He makes himself too well known for a very *Impertinent* Body : The Worshipper of an empty *Idol*, which

‘ which is *Nothing* : Only enough , to
‘ make Fools venture their Lives and their
‘ Souls ; And rather leave themselves no
‘ place in the World, or in Heaven , than
‘ give Place to any *Competitor* upon Earth.

O *Vanity of Vanities* ! How has this *Smoak*
of Vain-Glory put out their *Eyes* ! And yet
we are *Christians* : Are we ? And do we
remember to what a Lord we belong ? How
was he Called ? A man *Gluttonous* , and a
Wine-bibber. Matt. 11. 19. A *Samaritan*,
and one that had a *Devil*. Joh. 8: 48. Who
through *Beelzebub* the Prince of the Devils,
did cast out Devils. Luke 11. 15. And yet
no one heard from his mouth, so much as
Thou Liest, or any thing like it. But when
he was *Reviled*, he *Reviled* not again : When
he *Suffered* , he *Threatned* not. 1 Pet. 2. 23.
But from what has been said, ’tis too plain,
That for *Humility*, as well as for *Faith*,
Hope, and *Charity*, The Gate is so Strait,
that Few do enter.

C H A P. X.

Again, Of Faith, the First part of the Gate.

LEAST we should Terrify any from Attempting to Enter, When all our design is to Whet the Minds, and Enflame the Desires of Christians all, to get into their most sweet and Happy Countrey ; Let us make now another *Experiment*, To shew that the Gate, which in one respect, for the Eminence and Perfection of these Virtues, is so *Strait* ; Yet through the Omnipotence, the Fidelity and Mercy of the most High and Gracious God , it may be found Open, and Easy of *Access*, to such as in earnest do desire and endeavour to Enter.

And to begin with *Faith*. This (I grant,) teacheth us many such things to be Believed, as are above Sense, and the Reason of *men* ; yea, peradventure , above the natural Capacity even of *Angels*. But when the same Doctrine of Faith acquaints us withall, That in those things, we are to give Credit unto God that cannot Lye , And not to take 'em upon *Trust* , from Men or Angels ; The Straits then begin to be Enlarged, and we see a Passage clear before us.

us. Had Faith bid me Believe God to be Three and One, Because *Isaiab, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, and John* had said so, I should have been at a stand; and durst not take such things above Reason, upon the bare Word of *Men*, like my self. But when this Faith assures me, That God has Reveal'd these things; and the Prophets and Apostles taught 'em from the Mind of God, and just as they themselves were Taught by Him; and did not Preach their Own, but his *Word*: My Heart then is presently *Enlarged*, and prepar'd firmly to Believe it.

Now, that it was God himself, who spake by the Prophets and Apostles, He has by so many Signs and Wonders made Evident, that there's no Room left for any just Unbelief. *The great Salvation which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard him: God also bearing them Witness, both by Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of the holy Ghost.* Heb. 2. 4. And then what God speaks, who will call in question? Could he Lye, he would not be God.

But the things propos'd to our Faith, are above Reason? What then? They are not above the Power and Wisdom of God. He is greater than our Heart, and *knoweth all things.* 1 John 3. 20. He can do what we cannot Understand. His Essence is more

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Sublime, than we are able to *Conceive*.
 ‘ And of what belongs to Him, we must
 ‘ not take upon us to *Determine*, any fur-
 ‘ ther than he is pleased to *Inform* us. But
 if an *Unlettered* man will easily *Believe*
Philosophers and *Astronomers*, in many things,
 concerning the *Distance* and *Magnitude*
 of the *Sun* and *Stars*, which seem utterly
Incredible, according to vulgar *Sense* and
apprehension :

*A Peasant may Believe as much
 As a great Clark, and reach the highest Stature :*
Thus dost thou make proud Knowledge bend and crouch,
While Grace fills up uneven Nature.

*That which before was dark'ned clean
 With bushy Groves, pricking the Lookers eye,
 Vanish'd away, when Faith did change the Scene,
 And then appear'd a glorious Sky.*

*Then burn thy Epicycles, foolish man,
 Break all thy Spheres, and save thy head :*
*Faith needs no Staff of Flesh, but stoutly can
 To Heav'n alone both go and Lead.*

Herb.

Why should not men much rather *Believe*
 God himself, in what he is pleas'd to *Re-*
 ‘ veal and tell us concerning himself, and
 ‘ those *things* of God, which no Man
 ‘ knows, but the Spirit of God? 1 Cor.
 2. 11. When his *Wisdom* and *Power* so
 infinitely exceeds the little *Spark* of *Rea-*
 son, wherewith he has endowed us :
 ‘ They

‘ They who will but well consider this,
‘ shall not be prest with any Straits, in Be-
‘ lieving any of those things, which are
‘ propos’d to our Faith, upon the supreme
‘ Authority of his own Word.

C H A P. XI.

*Again, Of Hope, the Second part of the
Gate.*

THE same may be said also of Hope. For if we should affirm, That the things which we Hope for in the Life to come, were to be Expected from *Men*, we might be deservedly censured and rejected, for Vain, and *Impostors*: Because Men may Deceive us ; and such Glorious things, they can never Give us. But here, the Hope upon which we build our All, is from that God who is very Goodness, and Truth : And neither can Deceive, nor be Deceived. Nor is there any thing *Impossible* with him, who is Omnipotent.

Tho’ the *Rustic* then might justly despise the Offer of *Solomon’s* Wisdom , or *Alexander’s* Power, when made by a Weak and fallible *Man* : Yet when God does make the Promise of his Heavenly Kingdom , why shall not the Christian Hope for it ? and when

when satisfy'd as to his Power, Do we want some *Pledges* of his Good Will? Behold then the *Types*. Did he not Lead his People through the *Red Sea*, as upon dry Land? Did he not Rain down Manna out of Heaven; Command Water to gush out of a *Rock*; Bring 'em by the hand of *Joshua*, through all manner of *Opposition*, into the Land which he had Promised?

And what will he not Give unto them, from whom he hath not withheld *his only Son*? What further can we Expect, at his hands, which is not Exceeded by such a *Largess*, which (without our Seeking or Hoping,) he has already bestowed upon us? If he gave to Sinners, yea and Enemies, the *Death* of his Son, Will he not give to the Justified, and such as he has made his Friends, (give to them) the *Life* of his Son? Nor does he count this enough, but has added also his holy Spirit, as a further Earnest of the Inheritance; to cry in our Heart, *Abba, Father*; and to *Witness* with our Spirits, that we are his Children, and also Heirs of his Kingdom. Rom. 8. 16, 17.

If then the Greatness of the things Promised *overcharge* our Hope, Yet can it not Exceed the Power of him that hath Promised; which being *Infinite*, may easily Erect our Hope, without *Hesitation*, to Seize the promised Inheritance; which
God

God has also confirm'd by an Oath added to his Word. *Hebr. 6. 18, 19, 20. That by Two Immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to Lye, We might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge, to Lay hold on the Hope that is set before us. Which Hope we have, as an Anchor of the Soul, Sure and Stedfast; and which entresb into that within the Veil. Whither the Forerunner is for us Entred, Even Jesus, made a high Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech.*

C H A P. XII.

Again, Of Charity, the Third part of the Gate.

AS we have found Difficulties in fulfilling the Laws of Love, by reason of our *Depravedness*; So shall we shew 'em to be *Fecible* and *Facile*, If we but well consider the Divine *Loveliness* and *Goodness*. For why should it be thought hard, with all our Heart and Soul and Mind and Might to Love God? When he is (without all Contradiction) the *Fairest* and the *Best*; and so, the *Worthiest* of infinite Love? We find no difficulty at all here on Earth, To Love that which
is

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is exceeding *Good*, and *Lovely*. No : 'Tis hard, in such cases, *Not to Love*, and to Love too much. Therefore God might seem to wrong us, in so straitly charging us to *Love* him ; as if we could *chuse* but do it, of our own accord. But in this lies the *Disparity* ; That what is Fine and Good here below, we *Love* it, because we clearly *See* it : Whereas, *no man hath Seen God at any time.* *Job.* 1. 18. We see his Works, (it's true,) very Fair and Lovely : Of which speaks the Wise man, and argues strongly ; *Wisd.* 13. 3. *If they that were delighted in beholding the Lights of Heaven, took 'em to be Gods ; They should know how much Better the Lord of 'em is. For the first Author of Beauty has Created them.*

His *Sweetness* also we do Experience in every day's Blessings. And we have the Witness which cannot deceive us, His blessed *Spirit*, in the sacred Writers, teaching us, That God is so *supremely Good* and *Lovely*, Nothing else compar'd with him, deserves to be call'd *Good* or *Lovely* at all. ' The *Fountain* of all Goodness ' and *Sweetness* is only in him ; and not ' the *Least* of it in any other, but only ' what is *derivatively* from Him. 'Tis a ' sure then, tho' sad Argument, That we ' have *Lost* our selves, when we do not in- ' tensely *Love* our God.

Ay,

Ay, but is it not hard to part with Goods, and Friends, and even Life itself, for his sake, To approve our Love? 'Tis so, (I confess,) to them that Love him not: But not to such, whose *Hearts* are set upon him, and all the desire of their Souls is to Enjoy him. Especially, when so many more and better things are prepared for them, who have the Wisdom and Resolution, to Despise all the poor Temporal Goods, for his Love. What then? Dost thou Lose *Vanishing* Riches? Thou shalt have an *everlasting* Kingdom. Thou Lettest go, that which thou couldst not Keep: But thou Gettest that, which thou canst not Lose. Dost thou part with Parents, Brethren, Friends? Thou shalt find God thy Father, Christ thy Brother, Angels and Saints thy Companions and Friends: And for a *mortal* wretched Life, One that is *Eternal* and most Blessed. Hear the Song of Divine Love, Cant. 8. 7. *If a man would give all his Substance for Love, it would be despised. Many Waters cannot quench Love, nor the Floods drown it.* And see it Exemplified, Rom. 8. 35, 37. *Who shall Separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword? — Nay, in all these things, we are more than Conquerors, thro' him that Loved us.* ' Thus, while
the

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‘ the *Martyrs* Bodies were burnt down
 ‘ in the Fire, on Earth ; Their Souls
 ‘ flew up in Flames of Love to Hea-
 ‘ ven.

But to communicate my Goods to my Neighbour, tho’ my *Enemy* ; and where he has done me wrong, not only Forgive him, but *Pleasure* him ? ’Tis to fight against *Nature* : True ; against *Nature depraved* by Sin : But not against the *Nature repaired* by the Grace of Christ. Does not God himself every day do the same, Distribute his Goods among his *Enemies*, and Forgive ’em, and render Good for Evil to ’em ? Making his Sun to shine upon Good and Bad ; and his Rain to fall on the *Just and Unjust* ? *Mat.* 5. 45. So to carry towards *Enemies* then, ’Tis not against the Nature of *God* ; nor against the Nature of *Man*, renewed after the *Image* of God. But it’s against the Nature of *wild Beasts*, and of such *Men*, as being in Honour, and Understand not, are like the Beasts that perish. *Psal.* 49. last V.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

*Again, Of Humility, the Fourth part of
the Gate.*

WHere the Proud and Arrogant think themselves to lye under an *insuperable* Difficulty, They that come to Christ's School, and Learn of him, shall find the Yoke Easy. When 'tis but to be *Humbled under the mighty hand of God* : 1 Pet. 5. 6. Where's the Hardship, for a poor mortal Creature to know its *own place*, and submit to the Omnipotent, Supreme, Eternal Majesty of the World? Or for such as well know their own Infirmary, to give others, who they know not so well, the Superiority? Pride grows upon *Ignorance* : But Humility results from the Knowledge of *our selves*. The Proud man easily spies the Faults of others; Because they are *without* him : But his own, tho' Greater, and known to every body else, he sees not; because they lye *within*. And the Eye that Surveys all *abroad*, is Dark at home, and Discerns nothing within its *own Circumference*. As the Pharisee, Luk. 18. 11. that crackt, and Boasted himself; and gave thanks to God, that he was so Good; and *not Like the poor Publican*,
Did

Did not see the *Pride* and Blindness of his own Mind, and the *Impenitency* of his Heart. And so, after all the high Thoughts that he had, and signify'd of Himself, The man that stood in the Lower Room, so Despised by him, was preferred before him; and went home *Justified* rather than Him. Whoever then, will but apply his Endeavour to get into the good Understanding of *Himself*, shall by such means, here break thro' the *Straits*, and find the Gate open to his Entrance.

Add to all this, That the Gate of the Lord's House which seems so Strait, and even *Impassable*, to them that are for Entering Loaded, and *Corpulent*, thatch'd with many Garments, and standing bolt-upright, Yet is very Easy to be Pass'd, by them that bring no *cumberfome* Burden, but come Lean and Spare, Naked and Stooping even down to the ground. In our selves then lies the main *Obstruction*, That we cannot pass; where many Saints, without much Trouble, have gone before. Begin therefore, *Christian*, to throw off the Burden of *Riches*. Know that God did not put 'em into thy hand, as a *Proprietor*; but a *Steward*: Not to keep all to Thy self; But to deal out among his *Poor*. And so freed from the Love of thy Pelf, thou'lt be rid of a Clog, that was thy main *Impediment*. Thou must al-

so take down the Fatness of thy *pampered* Flesh ; and let out the noxious humours of *divers Lusts and Pleasures* ; that puff up the Body, and breed a perilous *Dropsy* : And Last of all , Thou must Lay down the high Conceit of thy own *Excellence* ; and put on the *Humility of Jesus* : Stoop and bow down thy Neck in a humble Submission to the Obedience of his *Word*. And then, Complain, If thou canst not readily Enter the Gate of Life.

C H A P. XIV.

*The Gate, tho' Strait , must be Enter'd,
by all that will be Saved.*

BE it *Wide or Strait* , There must be *Striving* to get in at this Gate. Because after the present Life, which is gone in a trice , There's no other Place in all the World , where we can ever do Well, and be Easy and Happy , but only within this Gate. - Therefore our Lord, *Luk. 13. 24.* bids us *Strive to Enter*. Seeing all that are *Shut out* , must Lye *where's Weeping and Wailing , and Gnashing of Teeth : i. e.* In the saddest *Agony and Misery* : without any *Hope of Remedy*.
Whence

Whence arises that desperate *Madness*, To Endure what they would never Endure at all; and Yet will be Forced to Endure for ever.

O how much better is it to Strive for this Entrance, thro' a narrow Gate, where, after thou hast born a little *Trouble* and Labour, thou'lt find the sweetest *Rest*, and everlasting Pleasure! Could men Escape the Straits of the Gate, and the Pains of *Hell* both together, There might be some *Apology* for their Neglect, from their Frailty, who durst never Adventure here to force an Entrance; But when there's the absolute *Necessity*, either with violent *Efforts* to put forth ourselves for a while, or else fall into Labours and *Dolours* that will eternally endure. O where, where's the Judgment, and the Sense, If to Avoid some Lesser and shorter Straits, we'll throw ourselves under such as are the most Heavy and Intolerable, out of which there will be no Escaping?

But did no other Straits follow after this Life, Yet only the Loss of *God's House*, Where are all the highest Joys for ever, Even this should be most *Prevalent* with us, cheerfully to Pass, not only the Straits of the Gate, but thro' Bryars and Thorns, thro' Swords and Fire, if there's no other way to Enter. For tho' now we know not, or will not consider,
What

What it is to be deprived of *Eternal Bliss* ;
Yet as soon as ever the Soul is *Separated*
from the Body , The eyes of the Mind
will be *Opened* , clearly to discern what's
the *Loss*, and how deplorable the *Misery*,
Never to attain the blessed *End* for which
we were *Made* : And how it will gall and
Torment the *Lost Souls* , we may learn
aforehand, from that vehement bitter *Out-*
cry , *Mat. 25. 11.* ' *Lord , Lord , Open to*
us : And more, from the *Intimation* of
' that *Remorse*, which is set forth, *Mar. 9.*
' *46. by the Worm that dyes not ; in the*
' *Fire that is not Quenched.* We cannot
' now *Imagine* , with what *Heart-break-*
' *ing Passion* the *Cry* will be made , *Lord,*
' *Lord , Open to us.* As if they should say,
Without this *Entrance* , we cannot *Live* ;
And yet we shall not be *Suffer'd* to *Dye*.
So that we *Live*, Not that we may indeed
Live ; but that still we may be *Misera-*
ble. Therefore *Open to us* , *Lord* , And
whatever be the *Straits* and *Hardships* , to
be pass'd through , we'll *shrink* at none ;
But most gladly so *Suffer*, if we may but
Enter. But what's the *Answer* ? ' *I know*
' *you not.* I cannot own you for any of
' my faithful *Servants* , who *Loyter'd*
' away your *Time* , when you should
' have been doing my *Work* : And now,
the *Year of Jubilee* is at an end : When
you might *Enter* , You would not ; And
now,

now, when you would, You *cannot*. Thus Excluded, beyond all *Possibility* of Admission, Yet Nature still spurs on to Cry, *Lord, Lord, Open to us*. But they that here were Deaf to the Lord's Call, *Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate*, will hereafter find him Deaf to their Cry, *Lord, Lord, Open to us*. O then, If ever we'll be Wise, Let us Consult our *true Interest*, while *Time* serves. Let us *do* that now, when we may; which doubtless, we would with all our Hearts *desire* that we had done, when we cannot do it.

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The Fourth Book

*Of the Saints Eternal Felicity;
Under the Title of*

P A R A D I S E.



That in Heaven are True Joys.



Paradise is a name of Pleasure ; Signifying the sweetest Garden, and Enclosure of Greens, and Flowers, and Fruits, fitted for Recreation, and all manner of Satisfaction. In the *Earthly Paradise*, we are told, Gen. i. 9. *The Lord God made to grow every Tree, that was Pleasant to the Eye, and good for Food.* And from this Name, we may now take occasion to explicate (what we can) the Pleasures and Joys of the *Blessed* in Heaven. Which, if I mistake not, will be a Contemplation of singular Use, for the

the Raising of our Minds, to Seek the things Above; and engaging us, so to frame our Life, that when we must go off the present Stage, (thro' God's help,) It may not be to Darknes and Sorrow; but to Light and Joy everlasting. Most men are drawn by *Pleasure*, more than by any other Good whatsoever. And in one of our *Collects*, we are taught to Pray, *That our Hearts may surely there be fixt, where true Joys are to be found.*

' True Joys are worth our closest Search-
' es, and utmost Pursuits. But no such
' thing has this World for us, with all its
' mighty Promises to us. For Pleasures
' of Sin, and Carnal Sweets, are false
' Dreams, and but mere Cheats: They are
' Beauty in the Eye, and Honey in the
' Mouth: When nothing but Clogs up-
' on the Stomach, Gravel in the Guts,
' and Stings to pierce the Heart. We
' think our selves very Witty, with all Ea-
' gerness, to Catch and Engross 'em; And
' as soon as we have made Experiment of
' 'em, We are asham'd of the Abuse, so
' put upon our selves; To be mock'd and
' seduc'd into a Fool's Paradise by 'em.
' They flush our Fancies with high Expe-
' ctations of Heavenly Delights: But in
' the Issue, We feel 'em Torture our
' Minds with Hellish Gripes. So that if
' we'll honestly cast up our Accounts, what
' do

' do they prove but the Tempter's Baits,
' to catch our Souls? Alas, Here are on-
' ly the empty *Shells*: Above are all the
' *Kernels* of Satisfying and Everlasting De-
' lights.

But let us see, what holy *Scripture* inti-
mates of this *Paradise*, to notify its Joys;
Then try to Open 'em; And after, *De-*
monstrate, That they are far above all we
can ever Comprehend or Imagine. *Ezek.*
28. 13. 'Tis call'd the *Garden of God*.
Luk. 22. 43. The Place whither the Soul
of our Blessed Lord went from the Cross;
and where he promis'd the penitent Thief
to be with him. 2 *Cor.* 12. 3. The Place
whither *S. Paul* was caught up, To See and
Hear what was *Inexpressible*. And, *Rev.* 2.
17. The Lord promises to give him that
Overcomes, to eat of the *Hidden Manna*.
Luk. 14. 16. 'Tis set forth by a great *Sup-*
per. *Rev.* 19. By the *Supper of the Lamb*.
Luk. 22. 13. By *Eating and Drinking with*
our Lord, at his Table, in his Kingdom. *Mat.*
25. By the *Wedding*, to which the *Virgins*
went in. And *Mat.* 22. 2. By the *Marriage*
of the *King of Heaven's Son*. And what
Pleasures use to be wanting at such Festi-
vals and Nuptials? There are all Enter-
tainments, for delight of the Guests:
Every thing to make 'em Merry and Joy-
ful. But what's above all, 'Tis the *King*
of *Heaven's own Joy*. To which all the

Joy upon Earth is very pitiful and *Mean*:
 Our Lord calls it *His Joy*. *Mat. 25. 21.*
Enter into the Joy of thy Lord. And that,
 for certain, will be a Joy worthy of
 God.

C H A P. II.

Of the Joy of the Understanding.

THE Kingdom of Heaven being the
 Seat of *true Joys*, Let us enquire in
 some Particulars, What they are. And
First, Take notice of the Joys of the
Understanding, Will, and Memory; as per-
 taining to the *Soul*: And then, of the
 Joys of the several *Senses*, as belonging to
 the *Body*. Not that the *Understanding*,
Memory, and *Bodily Senses* are the pro-
 per *Subjects* of Joy: For Joy and Desire
 do indeed belong to the *Will*, in the Supe-
 rior Part; and to the *Appetite*, in the In-
 ferior. But speaking according to *Vulgar*
 apprehension, We say, The *Eye* is de-
 lighted with the beauty of Colours; or
 the *Ear*, with the sweetness of Sounds.
 Whereas the *Eye* and *Ear* are truly no
 more than *Organs* and *Vessels*, by which
 that Delight is convey'd to the *Heart*. By
 the

the Joy of the Understanding, Memory, and External Senses, then, we mean that Delight, which a man perceives by the things which he Understands, Remembers, or takes in at the Gates of Sense.

Now, (as far as we can conceive,) The chief and Principal Joy of the Blessed will be, with *Mental Eyes*, to *See God Face to Face*. 1 Cor. 13. 12. To *See him as he is*. 1 Job. 3. 2. And how great will be this Joy, we may make some Conjecture from the holy Scripture-representation of it, As exceeding all the Joys which any one has ever *Seen, Heard, Desir'd or Thought*. Isa. 64. 4. and 1 Cor. 2. 9. For here is meant the prime Essential Bliss, consisting in the *Vision* of God himself. According to Mat. 5. 8. *Blessed are the Pure in heart; For they shall See God*. And Job. 17. 3. *This is Life Eternal, To Know thee, the only true God*. And how great is that *Amplification* of the Good found in this *Vision*? To be such, as no man ever *Saw, or Heard, or knew how to Desire, or so much as Imagine*? Nor is this any Flourish; But the greatest *Verity*. For the Eyes, Ears, and Heart of man are us'd only to such Joys as are *Bounded, Measur'd, and Finite*. Whereas the *Vision* of God, is the *Vision* of *Light Inaccessible*, and altogether *Infinite*; which

comprises in it all manner of Good. And therefore, when *Moses* begg'd of God, To shew him his Glory, *Exod. 23. 18.* The Lord answer'd him, *I will make all my Goodness pass before thee.*

Yea, Reason tells us, That the Delight which is perceived by the Understanding requires these Three things; An *Intelligent Power*, a meet *Object*, and the *Union* of that *Object* with the *Power*. Now, by how much *Abler* is the *Power*, and *Nobler* the *Object*, and closer the *Union*, So much greater must be the *Delectation*. But that the *Understanding* or *Mind* is much *Higher*, *Nobler*, *Brighter*, and *Livelier*; and so abundantly apter for *Knowing*, than any outward *Sense*, cannot be made a *Question*. That God also is the *Supreme* and most *Glorious Object*, not only above all the *Objects* of *Sense*, but above all else that the *Mind* can ever perceive; Because he's an *Infinite Good*, and all manner of Good, Yea *Goodness* it self; This can be no more doubted. And then, that the *Union* of the *Understanding* with God by open *Vision*, is the most intimate *Union*, Whereby the very *Essence* of God penetrates the whole *Mind*, and all the *Mind* it self is *Immers'd* and transform'd into God, as the mighty *Ocean* of all *Delectation*, is no less certain.

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*What wonders shall we feel, when we shall see
Thy full-cy'd Love!*

*When thou shalt Look us out of Pain,
And one Aspect of thine spend in delight,
More than a thousand Suns disburse in Light,
In Heav'n above!*

Herbert.

O then, who can conceive or guess how
Transporting that Joy must needs be!
What that Salutation of the Supreme
Good; and such *Embracing* the Spouse
of infinite Loveliness and Sweetness!
This is evident, That in the Conjunction
of a fair Colour with the Sense of Seeing,
and of a sweet Sound with the Sense of
Hearing; and of any other *Sensibles* with
their *Senses*, We experience a Pleasure,
often so *Affecting*, that some have been
thus rap't even out of their *Senses*. Yet
these Powers of Sense are still no more
than *Matter*; which the *Beasts* have in
common with Men. And their Objects
also are but *Bodily*; and which frequently
do *Hurt*, as well as *Pleasure*. Yea farther,
this Union is but *Superficial* and *External*.
Nor is it made in *several* Senses neither:
But the Image only sorts it self with some
particular Power. Whereas the spiritual
Union of God with the Understanding is

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firm and Lasting, and altogether : While Bodily delights, taken in by the Senses, and not instill'd all at once, but *q.* drop by drop, are *Transient* and Vanishing. Therefore the delight of the *Mind* must needs incomparably excel all that of the *Sense*.

Recollect this then, *O man* ; and do but weigh in a true *Balance*, all the Pleasure which this *World* offers, with that which *God* promises, Even the *Vision* of his Blessed Self, to them that Love him : And chuse whether thou wilt. If thou lovest *Pleasure*, (which thou canst not deny, but thou dost,) For certain, thou hadst much better chuse the *Greater*, than the *Lesser* ; and the Pleasure *Everlasting*, rather than that which is but for a *Moment*.

Nor is only the *Vision* of *God* promised to the Saints in Heaven, but also the Sight of all things which he has *Made*. Here now upon Earth. our Eyes behold the Sun and Moon and Stars, and Sea and Land, Living creatures, Trees, Flowers and Metals : — But our Minds (the while) see *nothing* : *i. e.* not so, as perfectly to know any created *Substance*, Or the Essential Differences, Virtues, and Powers. No, Nor does man see so much as his own *Soul* ; any more than after the manner of Blind men ; To Grope after
Effects,

Effects, and get some Light by rational *Inference*.

O then, what Joy will it be, when our Understanding with open face, shall see the true Nature of all things, and dive into the very *Essence*; To discern all the Differences, Properties and Forces! And with what mighty Triumph will it be Amazed, to See the innumerable Hosts of *Angels*, whereof not one may, in *Form*, be all alike with another: and perspicuously to observe the *Distinctions* of all and every One! O what a glorious *Theatre* will that be! How desirable, How Amirable! To behold likewise all *Holy men* that ever were, from the beginning to the End of *Time*, gather'd together with the *Angels* of God: And to discern every one's particular *Accomplishments*; and view their several *Palms* of Victory, and *Crowns* of Glory!

Not without a pleasurable Satisfaction will be seen even the Crimes and Punishments of the *Lost*, in which the Justice of God, together with the Holiness of his *Saints*, will wonderfully shine forth. When the *Righteous* shall wash their Feet in the Blood of the *Wicked*. *Psal. 58. 10 i. e.* Their Works will appear the *Brighter*, compar'd with the other. The *Continence* of some will the more shine, when set over against the *Adulteries* of their fellows: And the

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Abstinence and *Alms* of some, set against the *Luxury* and *Cruelty* of such and such their *Associates*. When it may be said, That Young Man was very *Fair*, but very *Chast*. The other Youngster also made a fine *Figure*, but not content with a Lawful *Partner*, follow'd Lewd women, to make himself a scandalous *Adulterer*. That man was *Rich* and *Noble*: Yet he often *Fasted* and *Prayed*, and pour'd out abundantly to the *Poor*. That other was equal in *Wealth* and *Place*; but given to *Appetite* and *Riot*: He consum'd so much on his *Pleasures* and *Lusts*, that he had little or nothing to spare for the *Necessitous* and *Distress'd*. And thus may the *Blessed's* Joy increase, even from the knowledge of the *Wicked's* case: To see Righteousness shine forth in their *Punishment*, as well as in the *Despised* Godly man's *Advancement*.

For at present here with us, How many displeasing vexatious Prospects have we, To see Vice and Wickedness go off with Bravery and Applause; and Piety and Virtue cast out with Scorn and the worst Usage? Whence the Justice of Heaven seems much Obscur'd, and many are grievously Stumbled. But when all Punishment shall be join'd with Sin, and all Reward with Grace, Then shall the Beauty of

of Justice create Ease and Joy incredible
in the minds of the Blessed.

C H A P. III.

Of the Joy of the Will.

BESIDE that Pleasure which the *Will*
takes in the Good of *Knowledge*,
There are Three things that give it abun-
dance of *Joy*.

I. The dear fervent *Love* of God, and
Angels, and Men, never to be quench'd
or abated. For Love is the principal
Condiment and sauce of all *Lovely* things.
He that Loves counts all things which he
Loves the *Fairest* and the *Best*; and there-
fore, so much rejoices in their Sight and
Society: And in their Absence and Priva-
tion, no less droops and takes on, as one
Disconsolate. Thus, we see Parents, who
are naturally extreme Fond of their Chil-
dren, take 'em to be the *Finest*, and
Sharpest, and *Wise*st; Tho' (it may be,)
they are very *ordinary*, and dull and hea-
vy. Yet if they might have their Choice,
They'd not *Change* 'em for any other;
, in the Judgment of Unbias'd Per-

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sons, never so much more *Taking* and *Better*.

Often also do we see men that are in *Love*, (whether thro' Enchantment, Humour, or Accident,) most Fond of Persons very *Course*, and such as others would call *Deformed*; Yet so pleas'd with their Company and Conversation, that they resent it as a heavy Cross and *Misfortune*, to be Torn from 'em. This sure could never be, Were not Love the *Charming Ingredient*, which gave the pleasing Relish to all that's counted *Amiable*. And if this be so, How sublime then will be the *Saints Pleasure*, To be ever Conversant with God, and all the Blessed; whom they cannot but always the most ardently *Love*; And not thro' any Error of Judgment, *Mistake* 'em, But in the greatest reality, *know* 'em to be the *Fairest* and the *Best*; And such also from whom they are sure, never to be *Parted*; and by whom they'll never cease to be *Loved*! As on the contrary, 'Twill be one of the bitter *Torments* of the Damned, To be always Linkt to such, as they most of all *Abhor*; and by whom they know themselves to have been *Circumvented*, and most cruelly and basely us'd in a thousand particulars.

II. Another thing which will create so great Joy in the Wills of the Blessed, is the full and perfect Rest and *Tranquillity*, which will render 'em every way, and at all times, Content and *Easy*. Too notorious it is, that here on Earth, scarce any Body is *Satisfy'd* with his Lot. Nobody but desires many things, which he cannot *Compass*. So that all here are *Hungry*, all are *Thirsty*, all *Restless*, and some way or other *Uneasy*. And no Wonder at the matter: When our Mind is capable of an *Infinite Good*; and all the Created things which Tempt or Flatter us here, are small and *Frail*, and at best, cannot hold out Long. O with what Joy then will the man abound, who finds himself in that Place and State, where he shall (all manner of ways,) Live most highly *Satisfy'd*! Where he shall desire nothing, Fear nothing, aspire after nothing, ever any more. O *Peace* indeed, *passing all understanding*! Such as the World cannot give. And only found in *Jerusalem* above, the City of the great King of *Peace*. After thee breaths and groans our poor *Exile* here, So full of Tryals, Troubles, and Distress: And 'tis only in the Remembrance and Expectation of thee, that we find some little Ease and Rest.

III. That

III. That which brings more Joy Yet to the Blessed's Will, is the perfect *Righteousness* there; more perfect, even than that *Original Righteousness* in *Adam*: which did (it's true,) subject the *Inferior* part to the *Superior*, as long as the *Superior* was subject to God: But this does not only subject the *Inferior* part to the *Superior*; but the *Superior* also to God; and with such a band, as is never to be *Dissolved*. That was like a *Woollen or Linnen Garment*: This all *Silk and Gold*: And that which makes the Will most *Fair and Lovely* to God, to it self, to *Angels*, and all the *Blessed*. This is the perfect *Righteousness*, that's without any manner of *Spot or blemish*. And of the *Soul* so clad, it may be said, as *Cant. 4. 7. Thou art all Fair, my Love: There is no Spot in thee*. This includes the *Universality* of *Virtues*, without any mixture of *Imperfection*. And what a *Transporting Pleasure* and *Gladness*, like the *continual Feast*, will such *Righteousness* bring? 'Instead of *Prov. 15. 15. I cite, Eccles. 9. 7. Go thy way; Eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart: For God accepteth thy Works*. That is the truly *Secure Mind*, which never feels any *Remorse* of *Conscience*: Being so established in *Good* by perfect *Righteousness*, that it cannot

cannot Slip, but for one *Moment*. Hear the Apostle, *Rom. 14. 17. The Kingdom of God is Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost.* A Joy, that does not lye in Meat and Drink; in pleasing the Throat, and filling the Belly: But in the Righteousness, which fills the Mind with a solid *Peace*, and cordial *Joy*. For he that is compleatly Righteous, has not any thing in his *Heart* to Condemn him; Nor in his *Actions*, For which he might be Condemned by others. And hence arises that most sweet and sound *Peace*, with God, with it self, and with all others. From which Results that Joy in the Holy Ghost, *unspeakable and full of Glory*; with which Joy no Earthly Temporal Gladness and Satisfaction, is ever to come in Competition.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Joy of the Memory.

THE *Memory*, by Recalling many a former *Transaction*, will bring in no small matter of present Joyful Reflection.
For

I. The

I. The Remembrance of God's *Benefits*, so many and precious, which we found throughout our whole Life, Spiritual and Corporal, Natural and Supernatural, Temporal and Eternal Goods, cannot but fill the heart with incredible *Gladness*. When the Faithful shall call to mind how many Times and ways they were Prevented, and Followed with sweet Blessings, Loving-kindness, and tender Mercies.

II. To Recollect the *Dangers*, out of which by wonderful Means the Lord Rescued us in all our days; When so often we were Threat'ned, and in so many cases, fore put to it: What *Reviving* will it bring! What *Gladness* afford! And above all other Dangers, may I place that of *Deadly Sins*; which expose us to the continual *Peril* of dropping into an endless Hell; When God, even our own God, either by his powerful *Grace*, kept us from the great Transgression; or of his Tender Mercy, *Pardon'd* us for it. This Mercy so Rich and Peculiar, often shew'd upon his Elect, when it comes to their Minds, in that safe and serene *Region* above, O what an overflowing *Gladness* must it needs create! And such Remembrance of *Mercies*, should it be there wanting, How would they, (according to *Psalm* 89. 1.) Sing of
the

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the Mercies of the Lord for ever ! Than which Song (saith S. Aug.) to the Glory of the Grace of Christ, by whose Blood we are deliver'd, What can be sweeter to that City !

III. What shall I say to the Course of Times and Ages, from the Beginning to the End ? How big a Pleasure will it bring, to Record so many *Changes* of things, and such abundant Variety, with which the unimitable Providence of God so strangely Govern'd and Directed, and brought all to their due *Periods* ! Here, it may be, is that *Stream of the River*, *Psal* 46. 4. which so miraculously makes Glad the City of God. For what is the order of *Ages*, devolving with a mighty *Velocity*, and never Intermitting the *Flux*, but that *Impetus* of the River, Rolling on, and hurrying away its Waters, with an incessant *Rapidity*, till they be plung'd and Lost in the mighty *Ocean* ? While now the River is *flowing* on, and Times *Sliding* away, Many make bold to dispute and *arraign* the Providence of God : Nay, even some of his Servants are often under no small Disturbance, at the *Violence* of the Flood, which brings so many *Damages* to the Good, and no fewer *Advantages* to the Bad : Sometimes carrying away Wealth from the *Righteous*, and Throwing it upon the *Wicked*. Hence are they Tempted to Complain, as *Psal* 73.

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2. *As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipt. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the Prosperity of the Wicked. And Jer. 12. 1. Righteous art thou O Lord, yet let me talk with thee of thy Judgments. Wherefore does the way of the Wicked Prosper? Wherefore are they all Happy that deal very treacherously? And Hab. 1. 3, 4, 5. Why dost thou cause me to behold Grievance? For Spoiling and Violence are before me. Therefore the Law is slack'd: And Judgment doth never go forth. For the Wicked doth compass about the Righteous; Therefore, wrong Judgment proceedeth. A bitter and hasty Nation shall march through the breadth of the Land; to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs.*

But after the Course of Times is Revolved, and the River is swallowed up in the Sea; and the Saints in Heaven shall call to mind that whole Course, and plainly read (in the Book of Divine Providence,) the Reasons of all the starting Changes; 'Tis incredible to say, how exceedingly the rapid flowing of the River, represented a fresh to their Memory, will make Glad the City of God.

Then shall they see, why God permitted the first Angel and the first man to Fall: And how his Mercy Recover'd the Man, and not the Angel. Then shall they see why God Chose (for his Peculiar people,) the

the Sons of *Abraham*, whom he Foreſaw would be a *Stiff-necked* Generation ; And how great Good he would Prepare for the *Gentiles*, by their very *Perverſeneſs* ; and *'make the Fall of them, the Riches of the World.* Rom. 11. 12. And, (to paſs by endless particulars,)

Thus ſhall they ſee, Why he permitted many, and even moſt of the Juſt, in this World, to endure *Hardſhips* ; That he might moſt Gloriously Crown them in the next. And from this very Remembrance ſhall they take occaſion, with overflowing Joy, to Bleſs even the *Croſſes*, by which they Suffer'd upon Earth, when they ſee 'em turn'd to never-fading *Crowns*, in Heaven : Saying, as *Pſal. 94. 19.* *In the multitude of my Thoughts within me, Thy Comforts, O Lord, Delight my Soul.*

C H A P. V.

Of the Joy of the Eyes.

LET us now Contemplate the Joys of the Glorify'd *Body*. And that which firſt here offers it ſelf is the Joy of the Sense of *Seeing* ; which, of all the bodily Senses, is the Nobleſt, and its Office extends wideſt and fartheſt. This (when entred

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entred the Heavenly Countrey,) will first of all Rejoyce in the *Splendor* and beauty of its own Body. For it shall see this Body *changed* by our Lord, and *fashion'd like to his own Glorious Body*, Phil. 3. last ver. Nor shall its *Brightness* be less than that of the Sun. For he, to whose *Splendor* it shall be Conformed, was seen by S. Paul, *above the Brightness of the Sun*, Act. 26. 13. And the Lord himself tells us, Mat. 13. 43. That *the Just shall shine as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father.*

O then, what a Sight, and how delightful a *Spectacle* shall the Eyes of the Blessed behold, when they shall see their own Hands and Feet, and all their Members send forth such *Rays of Light*, that they shall no more need any Light of the Sun or Moon, much less of Lamp or Candle, to *Dissipate and drive away all manner of Darknels*!

Nor shall they see only their own Bodies, Vying with the Sun; but (next to their Glorious Lord's,) the Bodies also of all his Saints. And if one Sun Rising cheers the whole Earth, O then, what shall it be to see innumerable *Suns*. not *Illustrious* only with *Light*, but most *Lovely* with the *Resplendency and Beauty* of all their Parts! Nor shall we need there to close our Eyes, Lest they should be *Opprest* and hurt with the *Splendor*; when they shall be made *im-*
possible

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passible and Immortal. For he that shall so Fortify the Eyes of the Mind in the Light of Glory, that they shall not at all be Opprest with that *Glory*, but see God Face to Face; will also Corroborate the Eyes of the Body, with such strength and Impassibility; that without any manner of Uneasiness, they may see not One Sun alone, but such Suns without Number.

And as an Addition to this Joy of the Eyes, may be that which S. Aug. supposes in his Book of the City of God, That the blessed Martyrs, in those parts of their Bodies where they receiv'd their mortal Wounds, shall carry some fair and Glorious Badges of their eminent Virtues: As the Wounds of our Lord remain'd to be seen after his Resurrection. And then, what Tongue can utter the Brightness, with which those sacred Ensigns shall shine forth! We must leave to Admiration, things beyond our Conception, as well as Expression.

Now what shall I, what can I say, worthy of the Pleasure, which the Eyes of the Blessed shall perceive in the Prospect of all that mighty City; which the sacred Writers, (for want of better Terms to express its Beauty,) have set forth, as all Golden, and adorn'd with Jewels, and Pearls, and Precious Stones? And yet farther, what Delineation shall I undertake of that New Heaven and New Earth, which
holy

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holy Scripture promises to succeed, after the Last day; and the Renovation and Change of the *Universe*, into a far better State than the present? Tho' that be to us Unknown, Yet no doubt, but it will ravish the Eyes of the blessed *Spectators*, with a new and *incredible Joy*; 'when they shall come to behold that most beautiful *Phoenix* rise out of the Ashes of the old World, that most *Refined* piece of God's Last *Handy-work*, in all its wonderful Lustre and Glory.

'When, to have but a true and perfect *Idea* of the *Mundane System*, even as now it is; To be carry'd thro' the *Universe*, and take a full *Survey*, not only of what we call the World, here below; but of those many and mighty *Unknown Worlds*, over our heads: And to see and thoroughly Discern all their exact Dimensions, Motions, Natures, Contents, Uses, Novels, and Varieties; Some that care not to be any great Proficients in *Piety*, Yet (merely to gratify their Ingenuity and *Curiosity*,) Would be willing to quit many of the finest Pleasures that tempt 'em here, To be but Entertain'd and taken up with such a sweet and wonderful *View*, as they are eagerly aiming at, and even crack their Brains in stretching after; Tho' it's above all the sharpest of *Mortals* to attain.

tain. And after all their Helps and Improvements, and boasts of new Discoveries, very little can they make of it, beyond that *Conjectural* Knowledge, which is but a bolder sort of Ignorance.

O then, What inexpressible *Transports* and delight will it give, To behold with open Eyes, in the most *Conspicuous* satisfactory manner, all the new and stupendous *Frame* of a far better World, with every of the Springs and Movements, and the whole Regularity and Beauty, most worthy the Supreme Eternal *Architect*, the God of infinite Wisdom, Power, Goodness and Glory!

CHAP. VI.

Of the Joy of the Ears.

THat the Sense of *Hearing*, together with the Organs of *Speaking*, shall remain in Heaven, there's no Reason to doubt. For the Bodies of the Blessed are true and Living Bodies, and Perfect all over; even as the Body of our Lord, after his Resurrection: which all the Apostles, and many others, men and women, perceiv'd most clearly; when they heard him

him *Speak* to 'em; and *Answering* the questions which they did put to him. As *Act. 1. 6.* And *S. Paul* in particular, heard him *Speak from Heaven to him. Act. 9. 4, 5, 6.*

That there shall be also *Songs* in Heaven, and chiefly that of the sweet *Hallelujah*, He that Lay in our Lord's Bosom tells us, *Rev. 5. 9, 12. and Chap. 15. 3.* No question then, but the Heavenly City shall resound with the sweetest Songs, *Chanting* forth the Praises of the most High Eternal God; wonderfully to delight the ravished Ears of all his happy Saints. And if all things there bear a *harmonious* Proportion, No doubt but those Songs will be the more Sublime and *Charming*; by how much the Singers are more *Intelligent* and Expert, He also that's Praised more Glorious and *Transcendent*, and the Place where they Sing, more *Lofty* and *Eminent*; As likewise, the *Corona* and Concourse of the Hearers, more *Refin'd* and *Delicate*.

O who can Think, what it will be, in that profound Peace, and dear Union of Souls, and the Ardour of Love to their Supreme Lord, to their Blessed Father, Saviour, and Comforter, To hear the clear Notes, and Warbling Voices of all the Heavenly Choir, in the most perfect *Consort*, singing *Hallelujah*! With what Ravishment will our Ears be fill'd, When *Millions* of the Celestial Singers and Harpers, with
the

the most sweet and concordant Voices, and melodious *Accents*, shall joyn to praise the Lord; and Millions more, with the like sweet *Accord*, and rapturous *Ardeur*, repeat the same over and over!

And who can tell, but in that Heavenly City, they shall not only Sing the Praises of God; But also give some strokes of *Applause*, for the Victories and Triumphs of his *Saints* and *Martyrs*, Redounding also to the Glory of his abundant Grace? So *Ecclus. 31. 8.* ——— *Blessed is the Rich, that is found without blemish, and has not gone after Gold. Who is he? And we will call him Blessed. For wonderful things has he done among his people: who hath been Tried thereby, and found Perfect? Then let him Glory.* — The Congregation shall declare his *Alms*. Though this may signify the Praise of mortal Saints in the Church upon Earth: Yet seems it more agreeable to the Immortal Citizens and Church Triumphant above. For there they shall have Eternal Glory: Yea, and be Praised even by their Lord himself, who will say to the good and faithful Servant, as *Mat. 25. 21.* *Well done; Enter into the Joy of thy Lord.* And may not those Words be taken up by all the Heavenly Choir, and repeated again and again? This agrees with *S. Augustin's* sense, (*De Civit.*) *There shall be true Glory; where none is Praised through Mistake or Flattery:*

tery: And that's the true Honour, which shall not be deny'd to any that is *Worthy*; nor yet given to the *Unworthy*. To which none that is *Unworthy* shall aspire: For none undeserving is permitted to be there. O Blessed them, and abundantly Blessed They, who in that Place, whence *Fawning* and *Falshood* are banish'd, shall bear their Praises sung, without any danger of *Pride*; but not without the increase of *Joy*.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Joy of Smelling.

NOW, as to the other *Senses*, but little is to be said. Not because any of 'em shall want their agreeable *Gratifications*, and exalted *Pleasures*: But because the holy *Scripture* has not given us any Account what they shall be. We hear from some other Writings, *Narratives* concerning the *Bodies* of several *Eminent Saints* that have shed abroad a wonderful *Odour* of *Sweetness*; as soon as the *Souls* were *Departed* and *Glorify'd*. But I dare not depend upon the *Examples* of that nature alledged; as sufficiently *Authentic*, to infer from 'em, the much sweeter *Fragrancy*, which the *Living* and *Glorify'd Saints* Bodies,

Bodies shall Evaporate, in the Heavenly Paradise. Nor can I here be determined by the Authority even of Gregory the Great, (in his Dialogues, l. 4. c. 14.) concerning the Virgin Tarfilla, Looking up, and seeing Jesus descend; when presently, the sweetest Fragrancy was diffused all abroad the Air: To shew that the Heavenly Author of all Sweetness was coming: and also to intimate, That the Bodies of all Glorify'd Saints will be Conform'd to their Heavenly Head, in Sweetness, as well as Brightness.

*' We need none of these Stories, to raise
' our Apprehensions of the Saints Fruitions.
' Tho' we have ground enough to per-
' suade our selves, That where there shall
' be true Living Bodies in their perfecti-
' on, None of their Senses shall be want-
' ing, but more Compleat than ever:
' And then, we need not doubt, but that
' there shall be Objects on every side, of
' the Best, to entertain each particular
' Sense, with the sweetest Delight: And
' that this Sense also, (among the rest,)
' shall be much more Pleas'd than ever it
' was, or could be here. So that they
' who are delighted with Aromatic O-
' dours, sweet Scents, and rich Perfumes,
' have the liberty here to raise their
' Thoughts as high as ever they are able,
' and conceive, if they can, with what
' infinite Variety of Sweets, they shall be*

‘ Refresh’d and fill’d ; when in that supreme Garden of all *Delights*, they shall be surrounded with innumerable sorts of Heavenly Flowers and ravishing Odours, and the most precious Perfumes ; which will fill and *Transport* the Sense with an ever Grateful, but *Inexpressible* Delight.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Joy of Tasting and Feeling.

‘ **T**H·O’ there shall be no Eating and
 ‘ Drinking in Paradise, of the
 ‘ Meat that perisheth, or any common Li-
 ‘ quors, agreeable to *Mortals* here ; yet
 ‘ the sacred Writings tell us of Festivity
 ‘ there, and the *Marriage Supper of the*
 ‘ *Lamb* ; and also of the *Water of Life*, and
 ‘ that *Fruit of the Vine*, which our Lord
 ‘ will drink *New*, (or *Renew’d*, and of a
 ‘ finer, nobler, and Better sort,) *with his*
 ‘ *Disciples, in his Father’s Kingdom.* *Mat.*
 ‘ 26. 29. So that the Taste shall not be
 ‘ *Superfluous* there ; but serve to the high-
 ‘ est purposes ; When without the Feed-
 ‘ ing on corruptible *Viands*, There shall
 ‘ be on the Palate a perpetual Sense of
 ‘ the sweetest *Relish*, far beyond that of
 ‘ the

‘ the most delicious Banquet, and all the
‘ richest Junkets in this World. In a word,
It shall be a pure Refined Delight, *adapted*
to the Place and State of the Blessed and
Immortal.

Nor shall the Bodies of Glorify’d Saints
lose their *Feeling* in Paradise. For being
true Living Bodies, They may be *Touch’d*.
As our Lord said, *Luk. 24. 29. Handle me*
and see: For a Spirit has not Flesh and Bones,
as ye see me have. For certain, There
will never be any *Impure Touches* there;
Where all *Propagation* is quite at an End:
And not the least *Inclination* to it shall re-
main. *For in the Resurrection, they neither*
Marry, nor are given in Marriage; But are
as the Angels of God. Mat. 22. 30. ‘ They
‘ are all dispos’d of another, and infinite-
‘ ly *Better* way, in the spiritual and Eter-
‘ nal *Wedlock*; to such a Glorious *Bride-*
groom, in whom they have constant and
uninterrupted *Transports* of heavenly
Delight; unspeakably exceeding all the
sorry Fading Comforts of any other
Marriage: Even Fulness of Joy in his Pre-
sence, and Pleasures for evermore.

But no small Delight is that which will
accrue to the Blessed Saints from the con-
stant happy *Tone* and *Habit* of the Glori-
ous Body: When, (as the Apostle tells us,
Cor. 15. 42.) It shall be rais’d in *Incor-*
ruption, in Glory, in Power, and a Spiritual

Body. Of which high Endowments and Privileges, the Glory or *Splendor* of the Beatify'd Body, relates to the Sense of *Seeing*; But all the rest, to that of *Feeling*. For when a Body is Disabled and pull'd down with the *Pressure* of Diseases, Wounds, or any heavy Disasters, which are the common *Harbingers* of Death, How does it sink and Grieve under the grating Oppression? As when it is sound and *Athletic*, Hail and Well, It is no less *Easy*, Pleas'd and Joyful, in the feeling of its *Eucrasia* and happy State. But when (after the Resurrection,) the Saints Bodies shall be quite above the reach of all *Ailments* and Dangers, and endued with *Immortality* and *Impassibility*, and such a *Cra-ssis* as is all Hail, and full of Life and *Vigor*: O how highly Pleas'd will it be, to feel it self so Well, and *Perfect* all over? And how sweetly also will the Glorify'd Soul Rejoice in such an Agreeable *Partner*?

O what would not men give, (*Princes* and *Nobles* especially,) could they but buy *Health* and Integrity of Body, free from Gout and Stone, Pains of Head and Stomach, Limbs and Bones, all their *Lives*? How high then will be the *Gladness* in Heaven, from whence not only *Death*, but every *Disease*, and Hurt, and Ach, and Malady, will be for ever Banish'd

nish'd away? But besides the Removal of all *Uneasiness*, Those Qualifications, whereby the Corruptible Body rises *Incorruptible*, and the Feeble rises *Impassible*; as also the Advantages of *Agility* and *Subtily*, whereby the Animal rises *Spiritual*; What grateful *Appurtenances* will these be to the Sense of *Feeling*? How joyful the News, to hear that it's become *Spiritual*, and a *Glorious Body*! Tho' it ceases not to have *Flesh* and *Bones*; Yet so *Tractable* is it made to the *Spirit*, that (at its beck) without any manner of *Reluctance* or *Trouble*, It can move about with the greatest *Celerity*: Can Ascend and Descend, Go and come, any where; even as if it were not a *Body*, but a *Spirit*.

Therefore, like as the Sense of *Feeling* is *Ill-affected* and *aggrieved*, when the heavy *Body* (as now we have it,) is forced to move *Upwards*, or over swiftly to be *Hurried* from place to place: So will it be as *Easy*, and highly *Pleas'd*, to feel a *Liberty* and *Ability* of going *Up* or *Down*, and *Transferring* it self *hither* and *thither*, any where, even as quick as it pleases. Here then, Behold, from what a *Servitude* and *Drudgery* of *Corruption*, the *Blessed* shall be *Freed*: When they shall no more stand in need of *Horses* or *Chariots*, *Guards* or *Arms*, *Porters* or any *borrowed Assistance*: But the *Blessed Bodies*

themselves (by a Spirit of Power within themselves,) shall speed away, and even Fly, any where, as fast as they have a mind, with the greatest *Ease*, and without ever hanging upon any Helps from Abroad: And be every where *Invulnerable*, most Safe and Secure; Tho' surrounded and assaulted with never so many Squadrons of *Armed Enemies*.

O that they, whose Palate is so *Vitiated*, they cannot Relish any *Spiritual Delights*, Would at least, take into Consideration these grand perpetual Goods of the *Glorify'd Body*! And be so Taken and Affected with 'em, as duely and effectually to Seek after 'em! For thus might it so happily succeed; as to Raise up the *Groveling* Creatures so much Higher; Till Tie'd on by such Pleasing advances, (God assisting,) they reach'd at last to the Joys Everlasting.

C H A P. IX.

*The Joys on Earth Compar'd with those
in Heaven.*

WE have been explaining (thereafter as we could,) What Joys in Heaven God has prepared for them that Love him.

him. The Excellence of which let us now endeavour to Demonstrate by some *external Arguments*. And *First*, By comparing 'em with those Joys, which God in this Life is pleas'd often to allow even his Enemies, and *Reprobates*. And such are those Joys in Riches, Honour, Power, and many opportunities of Pleasure; which he throws away even upon such, as instead of Approving themselves *Faithful* to him, Fly out against him, and do little but *BlaspHEME*, and Affront him; That yet all the World admires 'em, for *Happy men*; and almost every one is ready to cry, as *Psal. 144. 15.* "Happy is the People that is in such a Case: To be so Set up, and Enrich'd, and Prosper'd; To have all that Heart can wish!

Which of the Lovers of this World, will not Envy King *Solomon's* Forty Years Reign in Wealth, and Power, and Pleasure, (some none of the best,) 'That prov'd such a Snare, to make him as great an 'Offender, as he was a *Possessor*? Tho' I 'dare not take the boldness of *S. Aug.* to 'call him a *Reprobate*: Yet are there Kings and Emperors in the World, (of *Turky, Tartary, China, Persia, India,*) that we can hardly hope to be any better; who enjoy the Largest Possessions; and so give up themselves to *fleshly Pleasures*, that they abstain from nothing, which their

Hearts, or Eyes, or Ears, or Throats, or Lufts do *crave*.

And, not to insist upon those mighty things, which are but in few hands; What Variety of Joys does God scatter in Common among such sinful *Mortals*, the greatest part of which either do not *Know* him, Or not *Fear* him, and *Love* him? Does he not *Fill their Bellies with his hid Treasure*? *Psal. 17 14.* And does he not give the *Earth*, with all its Riches, Pleasures, Flocks, Herds, Fruits, Flowers, Woods, Waters, Metals, indifferently, even to all sorts of men? Is not his *Heaven* adorn'd with innumerable Stars and Globes of Light, (as the Glorious Roof of this wonderful House,) Open and in Common to all? Does he not command his *Sun* to Rise, and his *Rain* to fall on the Good and Bad alike? And if now he afford such Joys to Reprobate Sinners, his most ingrateful *Vassals*, that deserve nothing but the severest Punishment; Can any one ever Imagine, that he should not reserve Joys beyond all comparifon, higher and greater for his Friends and his Children?

When *Fulgentius*, at *Rome*, saw the Glory of the Senate, he cry'd out, *How Amiable must needs be the Heavenly Jerusalem, if earthly Rome be so splendid? And if such height of Honour in this World be given to the Lovers of Vanity and Iniquity, O what Glory will*

will God conſerr on his Saints, that devote
 themſelves to the ſtudy of Truth, and the Pra-
 ctice of Piety? So good a Judge as S. Aug.
 thus gives his Opinion, (*de Lib. Arbitr.*)
Such is the Sweetneſs of Eternal Light, that
could a man abide in it but for one Day, he
would wiſely and juſtly deſpiſe numberleſs
Years, full of the Delights of this Life, and
all the Affluence of Temporal goods. The ſa-
 cred Author knew what he ſaid, *Pſal. 84.*
10. A Day in thy Courts is better than a Thou-
ſand. And if this be true; Is it not time
 that we ſhould learn to be ſo Wiſe, as
 thoſe, who after ſuch manner do caſt up
 their *Accounts*? And not only Say, That
 Earthly Goods are to be Deſpiſed, be-
 cauſe but *Temporal*; and the Heavenly to
 be Loved, becauſe *Eternal*: But put the
 caſe, This World's Goods were always to
 Endure; and that of the other World only
 for a *while*; yet *Averr*, That we would
 prefer Heaven, to be Enjoyed for a *Sea-*
ſon, before all the Enjoyment of Earth for
 ever.

Are we not then Deaf, and Blind, and
 Stupid, and Loſt; If for the ſake of any
Terreſtrial Goods, ſo Poor, and ſo Short,
 we turn our Backs upon the *Celeſtial*, that
 are ſo precious and *Eternal*? O merciful
 Lord; in tender compaſſion, burſt this
 Deafneſs, Illuminate this Blindneſs, Rouze
 this Stupidneſs, and cure this Madneſs. For
 I ſ
 why

why hast thou cast upon us any Beams of the Light of thy Countenance, If we have no more *Discerning*, of things so exceeding Great, and most highly Concerning? Yea, why hast thou given us any *Rational* sense, If we do not, will not See, even that which is the most *Apparent*, *Out-shining* all here in such an extreme *Disproportion*?

C H A P. X.

Earthly Paradise, compar'd with the Heavenly.

WE have compar'd the Joys of this World with the Joys of God's Heavenly Kingdom. Let us now compare the Joys of the *Terrestrial*, with those of the *Cæstrial* Paradise. We may guess at the Joys of Paradise on Earth by this, That it was a Garden of *Delights*, chosen of God, and given to Man, Created after his own *Image*: When the rest of the Earth was left to the Beasts that perish. Whence it came to pass, that as soon as *Adam* (by his Sin,) had lost the Honour wherein God plac'd him, and made himself even like the *Brutal Herds*, he was turn'd out as *Fellow-Commoner* with them, into the wild World. Many

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Many Descriptions we have of this Happy Spot ; Tho' very short, and little certain. *Alcuin* Sings like a Poet,

Hic Ver assiduum, &c.

*So mild the Air of Eden, soft and sweet,
Where every Day a fresh new Spring you meet:
No boistrous Blasts to discompose your Gear ;
A Weather-benting Storm you need not fear,
Where Clouds keep off, and never black the Face
Of Heav'n, that ever smiles upon that Place.
What need the pouring down of any Show'r,
Where Native Dew feeds every Herb and Flower ?
There's no Extrema, of Cold, or Torrid Zone,
But Flowers of Spring, and Autumn Fruit's still
(shown.*

S. Basil thus ; There God planted Paradise,
where's no Violence of Wind, nor Inclemency of
Seasons ; No Thunder and Lightning, No Hail
or Whirlwinds ; No Winter's Frost, or Springs
Wet, or Summer's Heat, or Autumn's Drought :
But Temperate and Pacific Concord of Seasons,
sweetly dancing round the Place, and conspiring
to Bless it with all their Goods ; The Spring
with its Sweets, the Summer with its Mirth,
the Autumn with its Fruits, and the Winter
with its Rest. The Waters thin and Transpa-
rent, carrying much Pleasue in their Looks,
but more Profit in their Use. First God chose
the Place, fit to receive his Plants ; and then
plac'd

plac'd in it all the sweet and rich Varietys fit for such a Place.

Next S. Aug. What could Men Fear or Grievs, in so much Affluence of such great Goods? Where neither Death was apprehended, nor any Impairment of Health. Neither was there wanting any thing that a regular Choice could Wish; Nor any thing Larking there to offend Body or Mind of the Man, that would live Happily. There was Uninterrupted Love to God, as well as between the Yoke-fellows, that lived in true and faithful Fellowship. And from this Love sprang mighty Joy. For what was Loved fail'd not to be Enjoyed. As long as Sin was Avoided, no other Evil was to be Dreaded.

To name no more Authors: Whatever any may think of these Particulars, We must conclude that the Place was better than any we now Inhabit. Man, for the Punishment of his Sin, being Dispossessed of it, Gen. 3. 17, 18. God said to Adam, Because thou hast eaten of the Tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the Ground for thy sake; In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy Life. Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth; and thou shalt Eat the Herb of the Field. And ver. 23. Therefore the Lord God sent him f. b. from the Garden of Eden, to Till the Ground, from whence he was taken.

In Paradise there had been no *Barrenness*, nor any need of *Toyl*: Nor any thing to Annoy, and give Man *Trouble*. No Sorrow of Child-birth to Women, nor any Subjection, but what would have given sweet *Satisfaction*. The Life truly Happy they would have led; without any Pains, or Straits, or Grief, to be ever Felt or Fear'd.

And if the Earthly Paradise would have been so free from Evil, and so fruitful of Good, What then shall we think of the *Heavenly*? which must needs be as much *Happier*, as it is *Higher*; and so much Better, as it is Prepared for them that shall be made far Better. The *Height* of the Saints Heaven, beyond all Comparison, out-reaches that of *Adam's Paradise*. And the *Blessed* in Heaven, that can neither *Sin* nor *Die*, How much Better are they than any Inhabitants of the Paradise below, who sadly made it appear, That they could both *Sin and Die*: And together with themselves, could also *Involve* infinite Numbers in their Guilt and Curse? But so happily now is it brought to pass, That the *Celestial Paradise* is not only freed from all *Evil*; But abounds with all manner of *Goods*; such as are unspeakably Greater and Better than any that were to be found in the *Paradise Terrestrial*.

And

And upon this account, O what Obligation have we to be Thankful to our God ; That thro' the *Redemption* now wrought by the Death of his own Son, Instead of the Earthly Paradise, Ravish'd from us by the Envy of the Devil, we have obtain'd a *Heavenly* ; which is by infinite Degrees more *Blessed* ! And that we may not be found the most *Ingrateful* to so gracious a Deliverer, nor the worst of Enemies to our Selves, O may we set our Hearts, and Exert all our Might, to get an *Entrance* into this Heavenly Paradise ; by such a lively Faith, and humble Hope, and unfeigned Love, and all Good Works ; as are the sure and ready Way, to that most Sweet and Joyful Seat of all the finest Entertainments, all the highest Satisfaction, and most Exquisite Delights.

C H A P. XI.

Comparing both the Goods of the World, and of the Earthly Paradise, with the Goods of the Heavenly Paradise only.

TO proceed farther ; Compare we now all the Goods of the World, and of the Paradise on Earth in a *Lump* together, set

set over against the Goods of this Heavenly Paradise *alone*; And see, whether are to be preferr'd. In order to which, suppose we all the Wealth and Empire and Pleasure and Honour of *Solomon*, and all such like, as are counted the Happiest Men upon Earth, That it could without any Trouble be Got, and without any Fear be Kept: Yea, that the same most Happy Men should never *Sin* nor *Die*: Yet so, that possibly they *Might* both *Sin*, and *Die*: This supposed, I am bold to affirm, That the *sole* Goods of that Paradise above, would far out-weigh the Goods of this *World*, and of the *Earthly* Paradise *conjunct*. Which from hence I do infer; Because all those Goods can never *fill* the Mind of Man, nor at all *satisfy* his Desire; Seeing his Heart is *Receptive*, and capable of an *Infinite* Good; And the most promising Matters here are at best but *Curt* and *Finite*. That therefore of *S. Aug.* still holds Good, *Lord thou hast Made us for Thee; and our Heart will for ever be Unquiet, till it Center and Rest in Thee.* To which purpose that in *Psal.* 17. last ver. *I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy Likeness.* Never before. And as long as the Heart is *Restless*, it will be *Wretched*. And if so; be sure, not *Blessed*. But the Heavenly Paradise has that in it, (this *prime* Excellence,) To *satisfy* the Soul, and put a full Period to all its

Dis-

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Disquiet. For what will he have to Desire, that shall be *Like to God himself*; Because he shall *See him as he is*? O what can he Wish more, that shall Reign with God, and be over all his Goods; Co-heir with his *Christ*, and Heir of all things? Unless any durst imagine, God himself to have the Uneasy Mind, or to be *defective* in Bliss, which is no more Possible, than that he should cease to be God.

Yet farther; These Goods of the World and earthly Paradise, whatever, or how great soever they might be, yet for this very Reason, That they may be *Lost*, do appear to be no Perfect Goods, nor ever able to Satisfy and quiet the Mind of Man: And consequently, not to make him Happy and Blessed. Whereas the Goods of the Heavenly Paradise are every way Perfect, and so Firm and stable, as never to be Lost, or at all *Diminish'd*. For the Saints once fix'd in those most Happy Seats, can neither *Die* nor *Sin*: And so, are most *Secure* of their Everlasting Bliss.

O may we, then, Open the eyes of our Minds, seriously to Weigh with our selves, of what infinite *Moment* it is, to get into that most Blessed State, of which we shall never be *Dispossest*. For here, we treat of the *Main* matter of all: And not only about some *Minute* and Perishing things. Let us therefore, now Berthink our selves,

so as to prevent the most Irreparable Damage. As he, who is the Wisdom of God, offers it to our most serious Consideration.

Mat. 16. 26. What is a man profited, if he shall Gain the whole World, and Lose his own Soul? Have whatever else we can possibly Compass, If we miss of the Blessed End, for which we were Made; we cannot but be the most Miserable for ever.

C H A P. XII.

Comparing the Price of Paradise with Paradise it self.

IN the last place, Compare we the Price, wherewith Paradise was Purchas'd by our Lord, and wherewith it must also be obtained by our selves, with the Greatness and Excellence of *Paradise it self*. Our Lord Redeemer, with the Price of his own Blood, bought for us that Heavenly Paradise, which, by the Artifice and Malice of the Devil, was purloin'd and snatch'd from us; Not for *himself* to Enter upon it, but only that we might be *Debarred* of it. Thus did he Seduce our first Parents into his *Rebellion*; that he might have 'em Partners

ners in his *Condemnation*. Therefore was our Lord himself pleas'd to personate the *Wise Merchant*, *Mat. 13. 46.* *Who gave all that he had, to gain the Pearl of great Price; (even the Kingdom of Heaven,) not with Corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with his own most precious Blood, 1 Pet. 1. 19.* Thus, at the same time, has he Bought both *Paradise* and us together. For we were *Captives*, that had Lost it by our Sins: And he *Redeeming* us from Satan's Thralldom of Sin, makes us also the Sons of God, and *Heirs* of the Heavenly Inheritance. Which gives us a most Convincing Proof, of what high *Consideration* is this *Paradise*, that the Wisdom of God thought it worth such an *Infinite Price*.

For should but any *Intelligent* wealthy *Merchant* here with us, think fit to Buy a precious Pearl at the Expence even of all his *Substance*; none would ever doubt but it must needs be a very *Eminent* and singular Good, that could hardly find a *Price*, which should be Worth it; Or else he would never so *Venture* for it. And would we but make use of any judicious *Recollection* here, Of what infinite *Worth* should we reckon the *Kingdom of Heaven*, which the Son of God *Incarnate*, not only with all Labour and Dolour, for Thirty Years; But at Last, with the Expence of his most precious *Blood*, thought fit to Purchase?

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Certainly, we betray a Folly beyond all *Apology*, If we'll set that thing at the vile Rate of some pitiful *Temporals*, which Christ our Lord, the Wisdom of God, counted worth the Price that is *Invaluable*.

Yet, not only our Lord Redeemer thought *Paradise* worth the Buying for us, at the most costly Rate of his own *Blood*; But all the Saints (well instructed by him,) have most cheerfully parted with all that they were *Worth*, all that ever they had in the World, To make sure of the most Blessed everlasting *Inheritance*. And counted it Cheap and Easy, to be so obtain'd. *Rom. 8. 18. For the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory to be Revealed in us.* And should any of 'em be asked, Whether they would willingly Chuse, again to go thro' such Watching, and Fasting, and Prayers, and Alms, Yea, Persecutions and Blood, to get into the Heavenly *Paradise* of God; They would quickly make the very same Declaration, *We reckon, that the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy, &c.*

Tho' the Blood of Christ shed for us, was such a Price of *Paradise*, as did not only *Equal*, but *Exceed* the Worth: ' And ' we have no more *Need*, than we have ' *Ability*, to make any farther Purchase of ' it; Yet has he a *Part* for us also to perform,

‘ form, before we get at it, that we may
 ‘ be *Meet* for it. Not by our *Merit*, to
 ‘ Win it ; But to follow the *Way* of his
 ‘ Prescribing, to bring us into it : Nor
 think much to *Suffer with him*, that we may
 also be *Glorify’d together*. *Rom. 8. 17.* But he
 asks of us no more than he knows us to
 have. And, as *S. Aug.* argues, What so small
 a matter, as to *break our Bread to the Hun-*
gry ? Yet you know what our Lord says
 to them that do it. *Mat. 25. 35.* *Receive the*
Kingdom prepared for you. — *For I was*
Hungry, and ye Fed me. Thus also *Bede* ;
The Worth (to thee) is as much as thou Art.
If thou hast nothing else, Give but Thy self,
and thou shalt have the Prize. What had *La-*
zarus, but his Faith, and Patience in di-
 stress ? Yet was he carried by the Angels into
Abraham’s bosom. The Thief on the Cross
 had yet Less ; Nothing but, Lord Remember
 me when thou comest into thy Kingdom. And
 he was presently heard ; *Luk. 23. 43.* *This*
Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

O the Bounty, as well as the Glory of
 Heaven ! How Happy man, who may
 Treat with his Lord, upon such gracious
 easy Terms, for the thing that is most Pre-
 cious of all ? Thou desirest a Paradise of all
 Delights : Give *thy self*, and thou shalt have
 it. Give *Thy self* ? Dost thou ask, What
 is that ? It is to give thy Heart ; To Love
 thy Lord with all thy Heart : To Humble
 thy

thy self under his mighty Hand : To acknowledge and *Bless* him even at all times : To rest *Contented* with his Will, in all Estates ; Whether he would have thee Rich or Poor, Honourable or Despicable, Well or Sick. For every thing that he Wills is Good ; and all his Dealings are Righteous. Say then to God, I am Thine ; Do to me Lord, as thou Wilt. I resist not ; I murmur not : I make no Objection against thy Conduct and Government. *My Heart is Ready ; Tho' my Flesh is frail. And, not my Will, but Thine be done.*

This is that *Holocaust*, which, in the sight of God, is of great Price. *Our Goodness extends not to Him :* But our Harkening to his *Voice* renders us Acceptable in his Sight. In short ; *Denying of Thy self* is thy Price, for his Paradise. And in so Denying thy self, Thou shalt not *Lose* Thy self, but most happily *find* thy self. Thus saith our Lord, *Mat. 10. 39. He that Loseth his Life for my sake, shall find it.* Yet, because this is a Wisdom hid from the Wise and *Prudent* of this World, (who are Fools with God ; and of such Fools, O how great is the number !) Therefore, *Many are Called, and Few Chosen.*

T H E

The Fifth B o o k
Of the Saints Eternal Felicity;
 Under
 PARABOLICAL Names.

C H A P. I.

Of the Treasure hid in a Field.



Hitherto, (as God was pleas'd to direct our Meditations,) We have spoke of the Saints Eternal Felicity, under the Names of such Places, in which they are said to Dwell, who are truly Happy and Blessed: As the *Kingdom of Heaven*, The *City of God*, The *House of the Lord*, and a *Paradise of all Delights*. Now let us add somewhat further concerning the same *Felicity*, under the Names of such things, to which our Lord has resembled it, in his Word.

And

And First, Take notice of this his Expression, [*The Kingdom of Heaven is Like,*] which he so frequently uses in his Parables. For it refers not only to the Words immediately following: As if when he said, [*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Merchant man,*] the Sense were, That this Heavenly Kingdom resembled such a Man. But it refers to the whole Narration coming after; Where, by Similitude, is described the Way to that Kingdom. And sometimes the Kingdom it self, and its Bliss is represented more *obscurely*; sometimes more *clearly*; and sometimes, not so much as touch'd at all. (To Explicate each Member:) When our Lord, Mat. 13. proposes the Parable of the Sower, he describes the Fruit which the Gospel-Preaching usually produces, according to the various *Dispositions* of the Soil, where the Seed of the Word is cast. And this he calls the *Mystery of the Kingdom of God*. Tho' it mentions nothing at all of the *Blessedness* of his Saints. But when he there adds a Parable of the Tares; he briefly touches the Saints *Felicity*, in mentioning the *Wheat*, to be gather'd into the Lord's Barn; while the Tares were to be bound up for the Fire. After this, bringing in the Parable of the Merchant seeking goodly Pearls, and of one finding the
Trea-

Treasure hid in a Field ; There he more plainly resembles the Heavenly Kingdom to a *Pearl*, and a *Treasure*.

And of this Last kind , I find only Six Parables of our Lord ; One of the *Treasure*, another of the *Pearl*, the Third of the *Diurnal Penny*, the Fourth of the distribution of the *Talents*, the Fifth of the *great Supper*, and the Sixth of the *Wedding*. To which we may add Two *Simile's* of the Apostle ; One of the Runners for the *Prize* ; and the other of them that Strove in the *Olympic Exercises* for *Victory*. Thus, there will be *Eight* Considerations of the Saints Blessed Life under these *Parabolical* Notions.

The *First* Parable is that (*Mat. 13. 44.*) which makes the Kingdom of Heaven like to a *Treasure hid in a Field*. And by what follows there , shews us how it is to be Obtain'd : Even by *Hiding* it, and *Selling* all to *Buy* it. Now by a *Treasure*, we understand great store of Gold and Silver, and many precious Materials amass'd together. And its being *Hid* may signify, That 'twas laid up *time out of Mind* ; so as to have no proper Owner ; but to fall to the *Finder*. What is the *Treasure* here then, but the *Divinity*, which lay hid in our Lord's *Humanity* ? (As *S. Hil.* and *Jer.* do expound it.) For *in him dwells all the*
Fulness

Fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. 2. 9. The Deity is the truest Treasure of all Good : And so Ancient indeed, That it is beyond all Memory , from all Eternity. Neither has it any Owner ; when as it self is the Lord of all. Yet is it said to fall to the Share of them that find it ; Because the Lord does freely bestow himself upon them that are for Parting with all , to Gain him. 'Tis Hid , as under ground in a Field , in the Human Nature of our Lord : For tho' the Divinity be every where ; Yet never more properly than in that Nature , to which it is so United, that God and Man there are but one Person. 2 Cor. 5. 19. God is said to be in Christ, Reconciling the World to Himself. But tho' it be no where more , Yet is it there so Hid, that it needs a Light set up, to Discover God in Christ. Such a Light as was the Baptist , Job. 5. 35. Burning and Shining : Which might be the Lamp prophesy'd of so long before. Psal. 132. 16. which God ordained for his Anointed. Tho' no man hath seen God at any time ; The only begotten Son , who is in the Bosom of the Father, he has Reveal'd him, Job. 1. 18. But as plain as ever the Light discover'd Christ the Son of God ; Yet the blinded Jews could not, would not, own the Divinity in him. For had they known it, They would not have Crucify'd the Lord of Glory. 1 Cor. 2. 8.

K

This

This Treasure therefore, he that's Taught of God, Finds and Hides; and Selling all that he has, buys the Field. To *Hide* the Treasure found, what is it, but to cover received *Grace*, under the Veil of *Humility*? And not to be puff'd up with the Light sent from Above, nor make proud boast of Divine Consolations and Revelations: Least Vain-Glory corrupt the True. St. Paul said, *It was not Expedient for him to Glory.* 2 Cor. 12. 1. Tho' no one might have such Cause, as he had for it: Yet he speaks there, of a man caught up into *Paradise*, as if it had been none of *Himself*: And not that Mention made neither, till *Fourteen Years* after.

Farther; Gladly to *part with all*, for the Purchasing of that Field, where the Treasure Lay, what does it signify, But that he who would Enjoy God and Christ, in the Kingdom of Heaven, must take his *Affections* off all Earthly things, and devote himself, and whatever he has in the World, to the Will and Service of God? And that, not with a Heavy Heart, and as a forced *Putt*, But with Free will, and great *Alacrity*. For God loveth a *Cheerful Giver*. 2 Cor. 9. 7. And whoever does but well Understand, how rich a *Treasure* it is, to Enjoy Christ our Lord, in the Heavenly Eternal Countrey, To see his *Godhead* with the eyes of the *Mind*, and

and his *Manhood* even with *Bodily* eyes, To be made Partaker of all the *Goods* of God and Christ, and secur'd in that Blessed Portion for ever; never will he think it any great matter, to Despise all Temporal things, and even Life it self, for the Love of God, and such Felicity everlasting.

Of this Mind was S. Ignatius, when he could say, Let Fire, the Cross, Worrying of wild Beasts, Cutting, Disjointing, Breaking of Members, the ruin of my whole Frame, and all the scourges of the Devil come upon me; So that I may but be thought meet to win Christ. He that speaks thus, How much less would he Fear Want, Shame, Exile, Prisons, that he might not Lose such an inestimable Treasure? And whoever would indeed Ensure the Treasure of Eternal Life, Let him seriously reflect on this, and bethink himself, whether he be so Prepared and Resolved, to slight and Reject all other Goods. For otherwise, he is in no fair Way at all, (Alive or Dead) ever to obtain that Treasure, without which he'll be the most Beggarly and Wretched for ever.

But how comes it to pass, That so many, with the keenest Concern, do search after Treasures of Gold and Silver: And not thinking all their Activity there sufficient, are ready to run for Infernal Help, To endanger not only the Loss of Credit and Life, but of Soul and Heaven? while so few

few do *find* or *seek* thy Treasure, O Lord my God, who only canst compleatly Enrich a Man, without any such Venture, Cost, or Danger? No other Cause can I allege, but the slender *Faith* of thy People; or such *Eagerness* in scraping together the Meat that perishes, which will not give 'em Leisure, but so much as to think and Consider of all thy Blessed Glorious Promises. Therefore, good Lord *Increase* our *Faith* in thy Word; and *extinguish* our *Thirst* after these Lower *Acquisitions* of the World; That with more studious Care, and stronger Desire, we may search out thy *Treasure*: And having found it, Let all go; that (by thy Grace,) we may make it our *Own*.

C H A P. II.

Of the Precious Pearl.

THE other Parable of the *Precious Pearl* is that which follows next, *Mat. 13. 45.* And as the Pearl of great Price is like the Treasure, so the Way of Obtaining it, by Selling all for it. We have need then only to shew here, wherein the two Parables do differ; which is in *Two* particular

particulars; That in the former, we are told of a Great *Treasure*; In this, of a rich *Pearl*. Again, that the *Treasure* was found by *Chance*, and the *Pearl* was sought by the Merchant.

The Fathers say, That is call'd here a *Pearl*, which before went under the name of a *Treasure*, That we might understand the Divinity of our Lord, which is the *Object* of Eternal Bliss, and the Vision of it, *Blessedness* it self, to be a *Treasure* indeed; But not such a one as is Divided into *Pieces* of Silver, Gold, or Precious stones: But *One thing* alone, which comprizes all the Worth of an infinite *Treasure*. Though the *Pearl* is but *One thing*; Yet such a *One*, as has the *Supremacy* over all other.

Again, The *Treasure* may consist only of *Money*, though in great *Plenty*; Yet all for *Lucre*; Not to make the *Figure*, or for *Pleasure*. Therefore, lest any might be tempted by that Parable, to look censoriously upon the Heavenly Bliss, only as a mighty *Fund*, and not for Splendor or Honour; This of the *Pearl* may be added, To teach us, that our Lord's Deity and Felicity is not only as a *Treasure* of unsearchable Riches, for Wealth; But also, as the most amiable *Pearl*, For all Lovely *Beauty*, and sweet Delight.

Yet farther ; The Pearl is his *Emblem*, both as he is the Son of God, and also the Son of the *Virgin*. For (as Naturalists tell us) The Pearl is generated of the *Light* of the Sun, and the *Dew* of Heaven : So the Son of God, as to his *Deity*, is begotten of the *Uncreated* Sun, the *Father of Lights* ; and therefore called *Light of Light, Very God of Very God* : And the same Christ, as to his *Humanity*, is begotten of the *Dew of Heaven* ; Because *Conceived by the Holy Ghost*, without any of Man's Concurrence.

And last of all, The Pearl is White, Lucid, Solid, Pure, Smooth, and Round. Such likewise is the Humanity of Christ, (and much more his *Divinity*;) White, for *Innocence* ; Bright, for *Wisdom* ; Solid, for *Constancy* ; Pure, without *Spot* ; Smooth, because *Sweet* and *Meek* ; and Round, Because *Perfect*, and Compleat in every respect.

But now, this Pearl is not found by *Chance* : No. 'Tis *Sought* by a Wise Merchant. And yet this Parable does not Contradict that, in which the Treasure is *Accidentally* hit upon. For both are true, Only as to *divers* Persons. Therefore did our Lord, in his divine Wisdom, join this to the other ; To shew, that all do not so *casually* come into the Treasure. Tho' some God so *Illuminates* forthwith by singular

gular Grace, That neither Seeking, Desiring, nor so much as Thinking, They are brought to the Truth of Faith, and to the most ardent Love, and thence to the sure Hope of Eternal Life. And then, to them the Treasure comes, as if it were by *Chance*. But not as to the Lord, who in his Eternal Providence, *Pre-ordain'd* 'em to such Grace, and to future Glory. Others he *Prevents* indeed by his Grace: But does not presently shew 'em the Treasure: Only Inspires them with a *Desire* to find the Truth, and makes 'em here the most *careful* Dealers; still Directing, and Helping 'em, till they find the *Pearl*.

Take, for Example of the one and the other, *S. Paul*, and *S. Augustine*. *S. Paul* did not seek the true Treasure, which is Christ, the Lord, But Persecuted him, as an *Impostor*; and Christians, as *Impos'd* upon. And when he was upon the Career, *Act. 9. 1. Breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter, against the Disciples of the Lord*, Christ appeared to him; and at the same time that he Blinded the Eyes of his *Body*, Illuminated those of his *Mind*, with such a *Convincing* Light, that of a *Persecuter*, he was presently made a *Preacher*. And tho' this came upon him by a happy *Chance*; In God it was determined *Providence*. So he owns it, *Gal. 1. 13, 15, 16. Ye have heard of my Conversation in times past in the Jews Religion;*

ligion ; How that beyond measure , I Persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it. But when it pleased God, who Separated me from my mother's Womb, and Called me by his Grace, to Reveal his Son in me, That I might Preach him among the Heathen ; Immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood. From the Womb then, he was set apart, by Divine Providence, to Preach the Gospel of Christ ; Though he did not Seek the Pearl, nor the Treasure in the Field. But by a kind Occurrence, the Treasure Open'd it self to him, and made him Love it , with so Fervent a Love, That he spared no Pains, Fear'd no Opposition ; But expos'd himself to all Perils ; and reckon'd all Advantages of the World, but Dung, that he might win Christ, Phil. 3. 8. ' Neither counted he ' his Life dear to himself ; so that he might ' finish his Course with Joy, and the Ministry, ' which he had received of the Lord Jesus ' Christ. Act. 20. 24.

On the other hand , S. Aug. From his Youth, began to burn with Desire of finding the Precious Pearl, i. e. True Wisdom, and Eternal Bliss. But when he fell in with the Sect of the Manichees, He long Labour'd hard, both with Himself, in Seeking, and with others, in Disputing ; That he might Discover the Evangelical Truth. And when he could see nothing in that wild Heresy, but fabulous Stories, and

and gross Absurdities ; Now he even despair'd of finding out what was Right, after so many Years spent in vain *Disquisitions*. So says he, in his *Confessions*, I was *plunged in a Deep Sea, and distrusted ever to be better Satisfy'd*. But it pleas'd God, that at last he should find the precious Pearl. And then, without delay, Selling all, and breaking out of the Toils of those Lusts where he had been catch'd, and scorning the Profits and Honours, after which he had Panted, He Devoted himself wholly and perpetually to the Service of God and his Church.

Therefore, might the Lord, in his former Parable, compare the Kingdom of Heaven to a Treasure, found without Labour, *Accidentally* ; and in the Latter, to a Pearl obtained by the Merchant, with much *Solicitude* and Pains.

What remains now, but that the Christian Soul (for a while) laying aside all Incumbrances of other Matters, seriously bethink it self in the Presence of God, What a Business this is ; How *Necessary*, and as yet, also *Easy* : But how Difficult, or rather *Impossible* it will be found, if the present Markets be *Lost*. For certain, The Children of this World would never let slip such an Opportunity, for securing the richest Pearl : Which for Millions of Gold, would not after be had. If while the

Fair Lasts, they could make it their Own, for a Hundred Pieces of Silver : They'd take up so much Money, though at the highest *Usury*. And shall the Children of Light be so short in their *Conduct*, as not to make sure of that Pearl, which would fet 'em up, for the most Rich and Blessed for ever ? When they are neither put to Borrow upon *Usury* ; nor to run here and there seeking for what's to be given in *Exchange* : But it will be to full Content, If they do but willingly Give what they have ; Though their Strength be so Low, That they cannot reach above *Two Mites*.

Therefore , O Lord God , shine with thy Light into our *Hearts* ; That we may know the *Inestimable* worth of thy Pearl ; and how Low is the Price that thou dost ask. Add this to thy Mercies, Lord, That the precious Pearl may not be offer'd to us *in vain*. And thou that hast forbid us to *Cast Pearls before Swine*, Mat. 7. 8. O grant, by thy Grace , That though we have sometime been so like the *Swine*, as not to know the Worth of thy Pearl, but to prefer *Acorns* and *Husks* before it ; Yet now Enlightned and better *Taught of God*, We may so well Understand our selves, and thy Pearl, as most earnestly to Desire it, and gladly part with all to Secure it.

C H A P. III.

Of the Diurnal Penny.

THE Third Parable follows, concerning the *Penny*, promis'd by the Householder to them that Labour'd in his *Vineyard*. *Mat. 20. 1.* And at first hearing, this may seem very much to *Depreciate* and *Disparage* the Reward of Eternal Life, to Compare that with so small a *Stipend*, which before was valued at the rate of a vast *Treasure*, and a *Pearl* of the greatest Price. But such an *Extenuation* is here made, only that the Reward may seem better to *Correspond* with the Work. For the Similitude might sound *Extravagant*, If a mighty *Treasure*, a Precious *Pearl*, a Scepter, a royal *Diadem* should be paid to them, that work'd but one *Day*, or *piece* of a *Day*, in the *Vineyard*.

But then, Let us not think so *Diminutively* and basely, as only of the *Penny* in ordinary. For 'tis no such matter here meant: But a *Heavenly Piece*, that will abundantly Suffice, for Food and Rayment, and all that may stand us in stead, and for ever do us Good. Such a Piece as is given by the Lord of the *Vineyard*, who calls it a *Kingdom*: And that, not without

without good Reason, when it Represents no Less than Christ himself; who is the *Treasure*, and the precious *Pearl*. For on the *Peny* there's the *Image* of the Prince, with his *Inscription*, and the *Round Figure*. And Christ is the *Image of the Invisible God*. Col. 1. 15. One that has no *Beginning of Days*, nor *End of Life*. But his *Being* is for ever the same: and his *Duration* that *Circle of Eternity*, which is still *Revolving* into it self: And abundantly more than any *Money*, does he truly *Answer all things*. For he is *Lord of All*. Act. 10. 36 *The true God, and Eternal Life*. 1 Job 5. 20. And if He himself be the *Peny* here given to the *Labourers*, Then nothing *Greater*, Nothing so *Great* can ever be *Given*.

But to whom is that *Given*; which after they have it, They'll never *Want* any *Thing* else? To whom but the *Labourers*? Not to the *Loiterers*, that stand *Idle in the Market-Place*: Not to such as spent their *Time* in *Sauntering* or *Prating*, in *Carding* and *Dicing*, in *Cocking* and *Drinking*, In *Sporting* and *Fooling*:
 ' Such as know not what to do with
 ' themselves and their *Time*; And so,
 ' from doing of *Nothing*, they fall to do
 ' worse. O how can such *Truants* and *Tri-*
 ' flers ever expect the gracious *Call*, to
 ' Rest from their *Labours*? And for what
 ' that

‘ that they have done , to be cheer’d up,
‘ with *Well done good and Faithful Servants?*
Seeing our Lord has assur’d us , That he
will give to every one according to his Works.
i. e. in some *Proportion* , to the Services
that they have done : and thereafter as
they have *Restirr’d* and acquitted them-
selves ; So shall they find Welcome , and
degrees of *Glory* accordingly. For tho’ the
same *Peny* be given to every Labourer,
Yet we are not from thence to Infer,
That the Rewards in the Kingdom of
Heaven will be *all Alike*. God and
Christ , and the same *Eternal Life*, (it’s
true,) shall be Communicated to all that
Enter there. But as the same *Sun* is more
clearly beheld by the *Eagle*, than by other
Birds : And as the same *Fire* more Warms
them that are *Near* it , than the more *Re-*
move from it : So is it here , in *Eternal*
Life , among the Blessed that see God
and Christ , One shall more clearly See,
and more highly and sweetly Rejoyce,
than another : According to the different
Capacities and *Qualifications* of the several
Recipients.

‘ But that the Reward is the due Price
‘ of the Work , and no more than the
‘ Labourers have Deserv’d ; That the
‘ Saints do so *Win* it , and *Wear* it : and
‘ that Heaven is no more than their just
‘ Pay, Owing to their *Merits* ; is a Do-
‘ *ctrine*

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' &rine too *Arrogant*, to be found in the
 ' holy Scriptures : which teach us better
 ' *Manners*, and more *Humility*, than so
 ' to *Vaunt* and *Glory*. The Word *Merit*,
 ' so rife at *Rome*, is never found in all the
 ' *Bible* : Nor *Desert*, but once ; and that
 ' not for *pious* Men's *Reward*, but the
 ' *Wicked's Punishment*. *Psal.* 28. 4. *Render*
 ' to 'em *their Desert*. And how doleful
 ' will be that *Render*ing ? Yea, Wo to the
 ' Best man upon Earth, that *Receives*
 ' from the Lord but just what he *Deserves*.
 ' Therefore, what we read of any being
 ' *Worthy*, is to be understood only, That
 ' thro' God's *Grace*, they are made *Fit*
 ' and *Meet*, *Qualify'd* and *Prepar'd*, to
 ' Enter into his Holy Place : *Adorn'd*,
 ' as a *Bride* for her *Husband* ; thro' the *Com-*
 ' *lines* that he puts upon 'em. *Ezek.* 16.

14.

' And what some of the Fathers speak
 ' of *Meriting* ; They mean no more than
 ' *Obtaining*. Not *Deserving* Heaven, for
 ' their *Work's* sake ; But getting in there,
 ' For *Christ*, their Lord's sake. Or if
 ' ever it be used in a farther Sense, by a-
 ' ny others, It may, and must be *Reck-*
 ' on'd among their *Errors*. Whenas the
 ' whole Stream of holy *Scriptures* carries
 ' the *Reward* for *Grace* ; and not for
 ' *Works* : And tells us all along, That
 ' we are *Saved* by *Grace* ; and that not of
 ' our

' our selves : But God's Gift. Eph. 2. 8. The
 ' Gift of God is Eternal Life, thro' Jesus
 ' Christ our Lord. Rom. 6. last v. The
 ' Pharisaic sort, who are too High to
 ' Receive it as a *Gratuity*, are never like
 ' to get Up, by so *Exalting* themselves :
 ' But still the further from the Kingdom
 ' of Heaven ; into which our Lord that
 ' gives it, tells us, None shall Enter, un-
 ' less he Receive it as a little Child. Mar.
 ' 10. 15. And after the best of all our
 ' Labours, bids us say, *We are Unprofitable*
 ' servants. Luk. 17. 10. And when, 'Tis
 ' of his mere *Mercy*, that we are not Con-
 ' sumed ; Of what rich *Grace* then, that
 ' ever we are Saved ? And what intole-
 ' rable *Pride*, that any should ever Think,
 ' it's no more than they have *Deserved* ?
 ' But it's no News, for some of the *Worst*,
 ' to put themselves on with the *First* ?
 ' When God's Servants are taught to call
 ' themselves *Unprofitable* ; and to say, Not
 ' unto us, O Lord, not unto us ; But to thy
 ' Name give *Glory*. And so, the very
 ' Blessed above are represented, *Casting*
 ' their Crowns before the Throne of the most
 ' High, and ascribing to him only all the
 ' Glory. Rev. 4. 10, 11. But they are
 ' under another Tutor, that *Assume* to Them-
 ' selves ; and clap the *Crown* upon their
 ' own Heads.

' That Round-about Way , which this
 ' Champion and his Fellow-Soldiers fetch,
 ' to prove the *Merit* of Good Works, Be-
 ' cause of the *Grace of God* , thro' which
 ' they are wrought, and the *Worthiness of*
 ' *Christ*, with whom the Workers are Con-
 ' join'd , and the *Virtue of Love* , which
 ' the Holy Ghost infuses into their Hearts;
 ' 'Tis but Darkening of a plain Matter,
 ' and ill *Fumbling* those things together,
 ' that are well and Needful, if *distinguish'd*
 ' asunder: *i. e.* Our *Working out our own*
 ' *Salvation*: And God's *Working in us*, to
 ' *Will and to Do of his good Pleasure*. For
 ' to follow the Work of our Salvation,
 ' is doubtless our Duty. But God's Work-
 ' ing in us, makes us much more *Engaged*
 ' to Him: and does not, cannot make us,
 ' at all to *Deserve of Him*.

' Never could they go more unluckily
 ' to Establish their Doctrine of *Merit*, than
 ' from such a Parable as this, that utterly
 ' *Ruins* it. Where the Lord lets his grum-
 ' bling Labourers know, That he will
 ' Distribute his Rewards after his own
 ' *Pleasure*: Giving to them that had
 ' Wrought *Longer and Harder*, no more
 ' than to the other, that came in *Later*;
 ' whose Services were Lesser. I say, Gi-
 ' ving; rather than *Paying*: Not what
 ' they had *Earned*, But what he had *Pro-*
 ' *mised*. For he is not a Debtor to his

' Ser-

‘ *Servants* ; but only to his own *Word*.
 ‘ (*Debet sibi, Non Tibi.*) ’Tis the Crown
 ‘ of Righteousness , which the Lord the
 ‘ righteous Judge will Give. 1 *Tim.* 6. 8.
 ‘ Give it,] because he is Merciful, and
 ‘ faithful to Fulfil what he has said. But
 ‘ still, ’tis *Giving* ; Not *Paying* : And so,
 ‘ shuts out all Deserving. Indeed , how
 ‘ is it possible , that poor *Imperfect Works*
 ‘ should ever *Deserve* the most *Perfect E-*
 ‘ ternal Bliss : Or that any one should
 ‘ Deserve to be *Paid* , for Rendring that
 ‘ which he *Owes* ? Or that the Good
 ‘ Works which God Works in us , (those
 ‘ Works that are his own *Gifts* to us,)
 ‘ should make him a *Debtor*, so excessively
 ‘ to *Pay* us ?

‘ Such , and many more *Absurdities* in
 ‘ the Doctrine of *Merit*, which could
 ‘ hardly escape the Notice of an Author
 ‘ so *Sagacious* , have even extorted from
 ‘ him several *Concessions* and Assertions all
 ‘ over this Work , very Inconsistent with
 ‘ such a proud *Tenent*. But his Engage-
 ‘ ment with a *Party*, whose sorry Cause
 ‘ needs those ill *Arms* , put him upon the
 ‘ *Necessity* of so Contradicting himself ;
 ‘ as to *Revoke* in one Place what he had
 ‘ *Ascrib’d* and Given to God’s Grace, in
 ‘ several others.

‘ In his *Descant* upon the Lord’s going
 ‘ out to call Labourers into his Vineyard,
 ‘ at

' at the Eleventh Hour, I find his hard
 ' Censure of the holy *Patriarchs* and *Pro-*
 ' *phets*; That they should all of 'em, for
 ' Hundreds, Yea Thousands of Years,
 ' be kept, I know not where, out of Hea-
 ' ven: And that, not only the *Apostles*
 ' and *Martyrs* of the Primitive Age, but
 ' the *Monasticks* and Votaries of the Ro-
 ' *mish* Church since them, should be so
 ' much aforehand with the old Saints, as
 ' to Deserve much better, for doing and
 ' Suffering much more, in this Gospel-
 ' time, which he calls the Eleventh Hour;
 ' I cannot tell, whence he should fetch
 ' this Divinity: When nothing like it ap-
 ' pears to me in *Mat.* 20. or any where
 ' else, that I can find, in Old or New
 ' Testament.

' He will have those Fathers only to
 ' Admire, and not Repine, at the Lord of
 ' the Vineyard, for his *Disproportionate* Re-
 ' wards. But if he be not quite out in his
 ' Notion, That the Patriarchs and Prophets
 ' were those Labourers that wrought till
 ' the Last Hour, *i. e.* from the Beginning
 ' of the World till these Gospel-days of our
 ' Lord's Coming, I think then, they have
 ' cause to Murmur at this *Author*, for so
 ' Post-poning them, who (according to his
 ' own Account,) must be the Men that
 ' bore the Burden and Heat of the Day. And
 ' Yet he seems to make no Account of their

' La-

' *Labours* ; As if any *Monks* or *Abby-Lubbers* out-did 'em.

' But in what follows , I must readily comply with him ; That not all who are called in the Last hour shall receive the *Reward*, unless they apply themselves (for that Short time,) to Labour in the Lord's Vineyard. Because so many, from this very Consideration, That Life is short, and all here will be gone with them so quickly, (thence) draw the *Atheistical Epicure's* Inference, *Wisd. 2. 1,* — *Our Life is Short, and in the Death of a man there is no Remedy. — We shall vanish away, and be as if we had never been: Therefore let us take our Time, to fly out into all Loose Liberty.* Such is the Thought and the Way of them that *Know* not God , or in their Deeds *Deny* him. Whence we may take up the Conclusion of this Parable , *Many are Called, but few Chosen.*

But wo to us , If in the Narrow space of our Last Hour , we do Squander away that little Time in Sleeping, Dressing, Playing, or Rioting ; when we should be full of Care, to catch every Minute , that it may not fly from us , till *Improved* by us. Seeing upon this *Moment* depends the infinite *Eternity* of Pleasure and Felicity , or of Pain and Misery. For how much greater to Christians is the *Grace* of the Gospel, So much greater will be the Condemnation

demnation from the Lord, to *Receive it in Vain*. And as the Last will be First in the *Rewards*, who well Acquit themselves in the *Last hour*: So the Last will be first in the *Punishment*, who during this Hour, stand *Idle*, as if they had Nothing, for God and their Souls, to do.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Talents, and Joy of our Lord.

THE *Fourth* Parable is that, *Mat. 25. 15.* — Wherein our Lord thus speaks concerning the blessed Reward, *Well done good and faithful Servant; Thou hast been Faithful in a few things; I will make thee Ruler over many things. Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* ver. 21. Two things here are Promised; The widest Command, and the highest Joy. I will make thee Ruler over many things: And those *Many things*, he calls *All his Goods*, *Chap. 24. 47.* And to be Ruler of all his Goods, What is that but to be *Invested* with a Power over all Inferior things? And to be made a Partner even in that *Empire*, which God himself has over all the World. And O what King then, or
Emperor

Emperor upon Earth can here Vye with any the least *Saint* in Heaven.

But because it might be fear'd, That so ample a Power cannot be Lodg'd in any man, without a great deal of *Solicitude* and Trouble, to attend it; Therefore, 'tis added, *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* q. d. As I make thee Partner in the utmost Power, so in the most perfect *Rest*, and *consummate* Pleasure: Such as no disquieting Care can ever hinder or Impair. And how abundant is this Joy promis'd to the Just in Heaven, O, who can tell? Never shall we know it, Till Experience teach it. But in the mean while, here are *Three* words, by which we may make some *Conjecture* of it.

The *first* is [Enter;] For 'tis not said, The Joy of the Lord shall enter into thee; But thou shalt *Enter* into it. Which speaks it to be a bigger Joy, than we are able to *Contain*. That we shall be Overwhelmed with it, as in a mighty *Sea* of Eternal delight. A Joy that will Fill us within, and Overflow without, and Abound all over on every side. What place then for any manner of Trouble can there be, in such a fulness and *Affluence* of Joy?

The next Word is [The Joy,] Where is not promised only this or that particular Satisfaction, in such or such a particular Good; But in the general, and absolutely,
Joy

Joy it self, Sweetness it self, Pleasure it self. And how can the whole Soul then chuse but *Acquiesce*, and highly Rejoice, when every way so Provided with the matter of all manner of Delight?

But the *Third* word is that, which doth Aggrand it into an Immense and boundless thing; That it is the Joy of [thy Lord;] Not such a Joy only, wherein Men or Angels do Rejoice: But wherewith God himself, in whom all things are Infinite, does Rejoice. And who can think what is the Joy of God? Who perfectly knows his own Infinite Goodness, and Enjoys it, and Joys in it, after an Infinite manner. Yet O *Christian*! What thou canst not now *Think*, Thou may'st *Desire* it, thou may'st *Taste* it; Yea and shalt for ever *Enjoy* it; If thou wilt but be the *Good and Faithful Servant*.

And let us see now, What is that, and to Whom such a Glorious Promise does belong? 'Tis to them that faithfully Improve the *Talents* committed to their Trust. For the Figure here is taken from a Rich man, committing his Goods to his Servants; To one *Five Talents*; to another *Two*; to another but *One*: Commanding 'em all wisely and carefully to manage their Trust, to the best advantage.

What

‘ What these *Talents* are, Expositors have
‘ variety of Senses. Some understand by
‘ em, *Divine Graces* ; some, the Holy Scri-
‘ ptures ; Some, *Natural Goods* ; As Judg-
‘ ment, and Ingenuity ; Some, the *Spiritu-*
‘ *al* ; such as Faith, Hope, and Charity ;
‘ Some, by the Five Talents, that Know-
‘ ledge of *Exterior* things, which comes in
‘ at the Five Senses : By the Two Talents,
‘ the *Intellectual* and *Executive Power* ; and
‘ by the One, barely the former. ‘ Some
‘ of these Senses may pass for Trifles ;
‘ and some, little to the purpose.

‘ The Author here runs out into some
‘ Length ; but with all his Penetration,
‘ seems to be upon an Excursion beside the
‘ Matter : While he makes the Talents to
‘ be only *Souls* themselves : Souls, entrust-
‘ ed in greater numbers, to the *Bishops* ;
‘ in lesser numbers, to *Parochial Ministers* :
‘ And in the singular number, to each pri-
‘ vate *Person*. Much he has here to say
‘ of the Charge of *Ecclesiasticks* ; not quite
‘ excluding Princes, Magistrates, and
‘ Masters of Families. But with small
‘ pertinence (I think) to the present pur-
‘ pose ; and much to argue his Forgetful-
‘ ness of many *brave Men* in the World,
‘ who, though out of Office, yet may en-
‘ joy more and bigger *Talents*, than some
‘ that sit in the *Public Places*.

‘ But

' But whatever Gifts and Endowments
 ' any Men have, whether of Body or
 ' Mind ; Whatever we enjoy of Power,
 ' Interest, or Friendship in the World :
 ' Whatever Wit or Parts, Health or Strength,
 ' Wealth or Credit, Gifts or Graces ;
 ' Whatever Advantages or Opportunities
 ' of Glorifying God, and doing our selves
 ' or others the true Good, To promote
 ' our own, or our Neighbour's Happiness
 ' and Salvation ; These I take to be our
 ' *Talents* ; whether we have 'em in the
 ' greater *Measure*, or lesser.

As the Parable then shews, Eternal Fe-
 licity to be the thing, which above all,
 we should desire, Because it comprizes the
 greatest *Power*, joyn'd with the most Ex-
 quisite *Pleasure* ; So it discovers the way to
 that Felicity, even a daily *Diligence*, laid
 out carefully, according to every one's ca-
 pacity and *Ability*. But they that still re-
 fuse to be at the Pains, not only deprive
 themselves of the Bliss, but expose them-
 selves to that Curse ; *ver. 30. Cast the Un-*
profitable servant into outer Darkness, where
shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. Where
 he shall lose all manner of Liberty, that
 he cannot go where he would, nor do
 what he would ; But shall be compell'd
 to *Abide*, where he would not, and to suf-
 fer, what he can neither Out-run, nor
 Undergo.

Yet

Yet the Servant thus Doom'd, is not said to be the wicked *Criminal*, or notorious *Malefactor*; Only the *Negligent*, Slack, and Deficient in his Business. For whoever may plead themselves clear from other Offences, Yet for their wilful continual *Omission*, they'll receive the Sentence of Condemnation; ' That as to all which is *Soul-saving*, they were Good for nothing: ' Though they might be Men of *Substance*, ' for their Enjoyments of the World, or men ' of *Parts*, for their Endowments of Mind, ' They did not catch the Opportunities, nor ' exert the Abilities which God gave 'em, to ' bring Glory to his Name, and do Good ' in their Generation; by Relieving poor ' *Indigent* Bodies out of their Abundance, ' which was not lent 'em, to Engross all ' to themselves, but, as God's *Almoners*, to ' dispense out to his necessitous Receivers ' round about 'em: Or by Admonishing, ' Instructing and Assisting poor *ruinous* ' Souls that lay in their way, To speak or ' Act in some such manner, as might look ' significant and hopeful to Turn, and Gain, ' and save 'em.

' Nor is it doing a Little here, which ' will suffice for them, upon whom God ' has heaped great Blessings: But *where* ' *much is Given, Much will be required.* And ' if they are for holding it in, where they ' should be Tender-hearted and Open- ' handed, Heavy will be the Reckoning

L

' of

' of such false *Stewards*, such *wicked and*
 ' *slothful Servants*: whom many that lye
 ' extremely short of their Ability, put to
 ' utter Confusion, by such frequent and
 ' noble Acts of Charity, as tell the World,
 ' how much more they can find in their
 ' hearts to Spare out of their *Little*, than
 ' the other will ever be persuaded to do
 ' out of all their *Superfluity*.

' O how much Good might be done by
 ' many such Great men as swim in Wealth,
 ' and by many such Knowing men as excel
 ' in Gifts, who yet do e'n nothing but
 ' hide their *Talents*, and let 'em lie so
 ' dead on their hands, that how few are
 ' the Better for 'em? And then, how
 ' much the worse will it go with 'em,
 ' That all which the Giver of every good
 ' Gift conferr'd upon 'em was so Reserv'd
 ' or Mis-employ'd by 'em, as only to Ag-
 ' gravate their dreadful Doom upon 'em?
 ' When instead of *Devising Liberal things*,
 ' and studying (out of their Plenty,) how
 ' to express their Gratitude for Heaven's
 ' Bounty, in some worthy deeds of Cha-
 ' rity, they clutch all in *Harpies* talons,
 ' only to their own Uses, and harden
 ' their Hearts against the miserable Crea-
 ' ture's Necessities. Instead of Running
 ' o're, as the rich and fluent *Fountains*, to
 ' water and refresh the Lower grounds,
 ' They are like the soaking *Spunges*, that
 ' suck

‘ suck in all, and without Squeezing w’ont
‘ part with a Drop: In no Care at all, to
‘ *make themselves Friends of the unrighteous*
‘ *Mammon, that when they Fail here, they*
‘ *may be receiv’d into everlasting Habitations;*
‘ Nor laying up in store any good Foundation
‘ against the time to come, that they may lay
‘ hold on Eternal Life.

‘ But amongst all the daily Expences
‘ and innumerable *Items*, So much for Ri-
‘ ot and Luxury, so much for Pomp and
‘ Gallantry, so much for Sport and Vani-
‘ ty, if not so much for Lewdness and
‘ Debauchery; So much squander’d away,
‘ to strengthen the Hands of the Ungodly,
‘ and so much Hoarded up, for the Own-
‘ ers hurt, to Harden their hearts against
‘ God and all holy Duty; After all such
‘ wild humfoursome *Disbursements*, and so
‘ many Holes digg’d where to *Bury* the
‘ rest of the Talents; what a pitiful *Dimi-*
‘ *nutive* Reck’ning’ remains, of what has
‘ been laid out to the Purposes of Piety,
‘ Charity, and Mercy; To feed the Hun-
‘ gry, and cloath the Naked, to ease the
‘ Oppressed, and Relieve the Distressed;
‘ To make many of *Christ’s* Members
‘ comfortable and glad, and demonstrate
‘ themselves to be truly Generous, Great,
‘ and Good?

‘ The Children of this World reckon
‘ themselves Wiser, than to be Taught even

' by the World's Saviour, How to part
 ' with their Penny, for *Expediting* their
 ' Passage to a better Countrey. They
 ' count themselves already at *H me*
 ' here upon Earth; and will leave it to
 ' the Christian *Fools* and Followers of *Je-*
 ' *sus*, to take care for another World, and
 ' to *Lay up their Treasure in Heaven*. They
 ' have somewhat else to do with their
 ' Time and their Treasure, than to lay it
 ' out at the Will and Pleasure of such a
 ' Master. And after all the *Politicks* (as
 ' Crafty as ever they are proud to be re-
 ' puted,) what Answer they will make to
 ' Help themselves off at the final *Audit*,
 ' where they must stand Naked, to take
 ' their last Trial for their Doom Eternal,
 ' If they can tell, I must confess I can-
 ' not.

' And where the *Unprofitable Servant*,
 ' the Lazy Truant, the close-fisted Miser,
 ' shall hear, *Depart ye Cursed*, and be
 ' forever Wretched, O what will become
 ' of the Scandalous Liver, the Evil-doer,
 ' the profligate Offender, the Lascivious,
 ' the Riotous, the Blasphemous, and such
 ' as are too well known even for all man-
 ' ner of *Vices*, the basest Carriage, and
 ' the foulest Abominations? What account
 ' of his Talents will be given by the False
 ' and naught, the Corrupt, and such a
 ' one as is to every good Good work Reprobate?

' May

‘ May all, in God’s holy Fear, Hear, and
‘ Consider.

C H A P. V.

Of the great Supper.

THE *First Parable*, *Luke 14. 16.* —
Sets forth the Saints Felicity, by the
Similitude of a great Supper. And not
without a very agreeable Propriety. For
in such a Supper, be it *Nuptial* or *Royal*,
You may expect to find all things that
are delightful to the Senses; and fit to
demonstrate the *Gallantry*, as well as *Plea-*
santry of the World. Therefore King *A-*
bashuerus, *Esther 1.* when he Ruled over a
Hundred and seven and twenty Provinces,
and had a Mind to flourish off the Riches
and Glory of his Kingdom, and the Great-
ness and Splendor of his Power; could
not hit upon any fitter *Expedient*, than to
prepare such an Entertainment as was eve-
ry way the most *Magnificent*!

For in such a noble Supper,

I. The Eyes are feasted with the Rich
Furniture, and splendid Ornaments of all
the *Banqueting Room*; with the Regularity
of the *Servitors* shining in their gay and

costly Liveries ; with the Silver and Gold *Vessels*, in which are served up the various sort of Viands; and with the Neatness and Curiosity of all the *Utenfels*, fit for such a Purpose. Next, The *Ears* are Charmed with the exhilarating Sounds of musical Instruments, and melodious Voices.

The *Nose* also is Regal'd with fragrant Flowers, precious Unguents, perfumed Waters, and the sweet-scented Ingredients, that shed abroad the most Pleasing *Odours*.

Then the *Tast* is humour'd and *Carefs'd* with all the richest Rarities, drest according to the exactest Art and Curiosity : With Choice also of the most precious as well as delicious *Wines*, even from all parts of the Earth.

And further yet, the *Touch* is eas'd, and pleas'd with fine agreeable *Retreats*, Chairs, and Couches, where to Rest; and feel nothing but to Content, and Talk of all that may still add to the Delight.

Thus in the Royal Supper, All Sweet and Good things that the Earth affords meet together, to fit, and Gratify, and Transport every Sense. Therefore our Lord, to set forth (in such a Manner as most takes with Flesh and Blood,) that supreme Felicity which has in it all manner of Goods, resembles it to such a great Supper. And *Rev. 19. 9.* They are pronounced *Blessed, who are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.* And

And how Excellent above all is that Supper, from hence may we farther conjecture, That all the Glory of *Beatified Bodies* will be as the splendid Table on which the Junkets and Dainties of the Last Course will be served. And how Gustful and sweetly Entertaining these will be, we may have some glimmering Apprehension, from St. Peter's Out-cry, in an *Extasy*, Mat. 17. 4. *It's Good to be here*; upon one Glimpse of our Lord's Body shining forth upon *Earth*; as all will do in *Heaven*. For if such be the *Second Service* and Garnish, O what will be the *Substance* of that Feast, which lies in the Fruition of the most Glorious Deity Blessed for ever! yea, what are all the Goods of this World, but as poor *Shells* and *Husks* of the Fruits of *Paradise*? And if such be the Shells and Husks, that Men, for the Love of 'em, can Lose even their *Wits* and their *Souls*; O what will be the *Product* and Entertainment of *Paradise* it self? Such, no doubt, as without any Cloying, will be so *Enjoyed*, as to be for ever *Desired*.

Nor are we to think only of such a *Supper* in Heaven, as the *Grandees* of the World use to Provide for their *Nuptials* on Earth. When we shall be as the *Angels of God in Heaven*, who are above all the Weddings and the Food, that now do serve to chear and comfort our mortal

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Life. And 'tis enough to say, That all the Entertainment Above will be full of such Riches, and Delights, and Ornament, and Glory, as are agreeable to that most Blissful state. We are told of the other, Because we know no *Better*: But may assuredly conclude, That the Festivity of the Blessed will be as much Superior to any amongst us here, as *Heaven* is Higher than the Earth, and as *God* who prepares it, does (in Wealth, and Power, and Glory,) Exceed all Kings and Princes in the World.

Now, if any be curious here to know, why the Felicity of the Blessed is deciphered by a *Supper*, rather than a *Dinner*? This may be the *Reason*, Because a *Dinner* is usually about *Noon*; after which, *Business* is to be done, till the Evening; whereas Supper being in the *Close* of the Day, when all the Business is over, After Supper follows only Rest and Sleep. Therefore in another Parable, *Mat. 22. 4.* which refers to the *Incarnation* of our Lord, There we find a *Dinner* made, at the *Marriage of the King's Son*. Because, when our Lord came to Espouse his Church, 'Twas about *Noon*; *i. e.* a great while before the *End* of the World. After which Dinner, many weighty *Businesses*, especially the *Redemption* of the World, and Reconciliation of Man to God, were to be Transacted. But
the

the bringing home of the Spouse to the Bridegroom's House, and the *Marriage-Feast* do follow after all the *Troublesome* part is over ; In the *Close of the Day*, after which remains nothing, but sweet Sleep and Repose, i. e. *Eternal Rest*.

But let us see, what's Requisite for the *Admission* of Guests to this *Supper*. *Luke 14. 16.* *A certain man made a great Feast, and Bade many. But they all, with one Consent, began to make Excuse. The first said, I have bought a piece of Ground, and I must needs go and see it : I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five Yoke of Oxen ; and I go to prove them : I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come.*

Strange ! That Men should be Invited of God, to a *Royal Nuptial Feast*, and yet draw back ! What would they do, If called to the *Wars*, or to some *Tedious Journey*, or hazardous *Enterprize* ? Such is the *Blindness* of Man, that will not be induc'd to Believe, what his *Eyes of flesh* do not see. But what's the *Bait* here lying in the way, which Men use to prefer before the *Divine Supper*, i. e. the *Chief Eternal Good* ? The Lord names *Three Impediments* of *Salvation*. Tho' such, as are not in their own nature *Evil* ; yet thro' an *Inordinate Affection*, are made the *Bars*, to hinder *Salvation*. The *Buying of Land*,

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Trying of *Oxen*, and Marrying a *Wife*: None of 'em *Sins*: True; But to Prefer any of 'em before the Kingdom of Heaven, is the sottish Oversight, that stops so many from ever Coming there.

Yet will any that name the Name of Christ, suffer themselves to be thus hamper'd and hinder'd? O that *Christians*, who are made to know better things, should with such Eagerness court *Honour*, *Dignity*, and *Power*, signified by the Purchase; Or *Gain* and *Increase*, shadowed under the Husbandry; Or *Sensuality* and carnal Pleasure, intended by the Wedding; as to spend whole Days and Nights in Seeking, and Getting, and Keeping, and Enjoying those poor Contentments; Till they utterly forget the most high and Eternal Goods, which God has laid up for them that Love him!

Nor will it suffice some, To Buy *Land*s, and Try *Oxen*, and Marry *Wives*: But so wide will they wander from the way of Bliss, as to *Invade* others *Land*s, or *Steal* the *Oxen*, or keep the *Whores*, for *Wives*. Not thinking, or never well considering, what an infinite Damage it is, for the sake of such *Trash* and *Trifles*, to Forfeit *Glo-*ry, *Honour*, and *Immortality*; and Lose the King of Heaven's Supper.

Did he not Promise us, despicable Worms, An Entertainment of infinite Sweet-

Sweetness in Heaven ; but only some *Crumbs* falling from the Table, or any *Fragments* of the Provisions enduring to everlasting Life ; yet were it our wisest Choice, To slight all the Good of this World, That we might enjoy but those *Relicks*. O what Madness then, to prefer any pitiful Dying Pleasures, before those Heavenly Provisions of our Lord, which abound with all manner of Eternal Goods ; where, with Angels, Saints, and the Lord of all, we might sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, and there Rejoyce for ever!

Now after our Lord had shew'd, what Hinder'd the Guests from this great Supper, He tells how the Defect was to be made up. Ver. 21. *He said to his servants, Go out quickly into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the Maim'd, and the Halt, and the Blind.* Yea, Ver. 23. *He said to his Servants, Go out to the High-ways and Hedges ; and Compel them to come in, that my House may be filled.* Because the Rich were so Taken up with their *Lands*, and *Teams*, and *Wives*, that they car'd not for his Entertainment ; He calls the Poor, that had not *Money*, to buy 'em *Lands* or *Oxen* ; Nor could so easily get the *Wives*, which they were not able to Maintain. He calls also the *Infirm*, that were not able to go abroad, after *Lands*, *Cattle*, or *Wives* ; And the *Blind*,
that

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that could not see the Land, nor Drive the Oxen, nor find the Wives: The *Lame* also, that could not Travel o're the Grounds, nor follow the Teams, nor dance at the Weddings. Now these that were *Disembarrass'd* from all Impediments, which detain'd the others, being Admitted to the great Supper, might *Congratulate* even their Infirmities, and find Cause to Bless the Lord, That he would have 'em to be Poor, and Weak, and Blind, and Lame. When many in this World cannot forbear to Repine and Murmur, that they were born Poor, or often are Sick, or Dark, or Lame: And therefore, in their own Opinion, the most Unhappy. ' They do not know, ' what God may have Prepared for 'em in ' another World; more than to *Compensate*, ' for all their seeming *Infelicity* here, which ' did they but well Understand, They ' might Rejoice, and be exceeding Glad; ' and find cause to say, The *Worse* 'twas ' with us, the *Better* for us. Never then ' let us *Repine* at the Providence of God, ' even when it is Lowest and Hardest with ' us in the World. But in all things, give Thanks to the *Best* of Fathers, who still Cares for us; and Acquiesce in his blessed *Will* concerning us; who may be the *Kindest* to us, even when he seems to deal *Sharpest* with us.

But

But tho' we may thus understand it, yet here, by the *Poor* may more properly be meant the *Poor in Spirit*, not in Wealth; and by the *Weak*, not those Disabled in Bodily Strength, but in the proud Opinion and *Confidence* of themselves: And by the *Blind*, not those Defective in their outward Sight, but Unskill'd in the World's *Politicks*, and a sorry Craft: And by the *Lame*, not such as falter in their Feet; But are Crippled in their *Affections* to the things on Earth. To speak out plainly; The *Poor* admitted here to the Lord's Feast, are such as be *Opposite* to those, *1.Tim. 6. 9. That will be rich.* (Are violently set upon it.) And tho' they have Money, 'Tis not to Hoard up, or to consume in *Extravagance* and Vanity; but to Lay out in the works of Piety, Mercy, and Charity. Like the Blessed Man, *Psal. 112. 9. That hath Dispersed and given to the Poor; and his Righteousness endures for ever.* The *Infirm* are such as do not Trust nor Glory in their own Virtue or *Sufficiency*. The *Blind* are those that *Believe* what they do not see, concerning God, and the Eternal Glorious Enjoyments, and the Torturing endless Punishments of the other World. And so, They are not wedded to the Earth, nor make much Reckoning of any *Sublunary* thing; But have their *Hearts there fixed, where true Joys are*

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to be found. And a happy Lameness it is, under which such Cripples may make bold to Aspire after the Lord's Feast, whose right Foot is Longer than the Left; *i. e.* Their Love to God, and the Eternal Good, far exceeding that to their Flesh, and to such Goods, as are but Earthly and Transitory.

Now let us hear the Determination of the great Master of the Feast, upon such as were so sottish and void of all good Sense, as to turn their Backs upon it. *Ver.* 24. *I say unto you, That none of them who were Bidden shall Taste of my Supper.* The Lord knows, how quickly they that Cleave only to things Temporal, and Despise, as *Fantastic*, all that is to Come, shall put off their Bodies, and find no farther Use of their Fleshly Senses: And as soon as all that they Admir'd on Earth, is utterly gone; 'Tis not possible to think how keenly they will then Desire, what before they did nothing but *Disdain*. *Psal.* 59. 15. *At Evening they'll Wander up and down for Meat, and make a noise like a Dog about the City;* pinch'd with Want and Hunger. The Day of this Life being ended, They would then be *Converted*. But the Repentance comes too *Late*, when the Space given for it is past. They'd be glad then even of the Crumbs that are the
Dog's

Dog's share : But none of 'em shall Taste of the Supper.

O that thou didst but know , *Soul of man* , what *Horror* is in this *Doom* , *Thou shalt not Taste of my Supper !* O that thou could'st but conceive , How *Raging* will be that *Hunger* of the *Miserable* ; and how sweet the *Refreshment* , of which they'll be deprived for ever ! What then would they give to *Taste* that , which they so ardently *Desire* , but can never *Obtain* ; Tho' they had all the *World* to give , and would most gladly *Renounce* the whole for it ?

And if this be so , O *Delay* not to *Turn* , while there is *Time* and *Space* to *Repent* . Now *Long* after the *Heavenly Supper* : Now *Hunger* , Not like the filthy *Ravenous Dogs* , who in *Devouring* , mind nothing but the *Pleasing* of their *Throat* and *Belly* ; But as *Men of Rational Sense* , Long for the *Entertainments of Eternal Life* ; For the *Bread of Angels* , and the *Hidden Manna* , *Rev. 2. 17.* which *God himself* enjoys from *Everlasting to Everlasting* . So let us *Live* here in our *Exile* , as not to fall in *Love* with it : But *Groan* after our *Country* ; To which when once we reach , we shall not need to *Range about the City* ; But enter the *Gate* , and be *Admitted* to that *Supper* , whereof we shall partake with

with infinite *Satisfaction*, and the *Pleasure* that will Endure for ever.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Marriage and Virgins.

TH E Last Parable is that, *Mat. 25.* Where the Saints Felicity is resembled to the *Nuptials*, unto which were invited *Ten Virgins*: Of which Five were *Wise*, and Five *Foolish*. And what we are here to enquire after, is, The *Bridegroom*, the *Bride*, the *Marriage*, and the *Qualification* to fit one for Fruition.

That our Lord Christ is the *Bridegroom*, we may quickly be Resolv'd. His *Prodromus* will inform us, *Job. 3. 29.* *He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom.* And S. Paul, *2 Cor. 11. 2.* *I have Espous'd You to one Husband: That I may present you as a Chast Virgin to Christ.* And S. John, *Rev. 19. 7.* *Let us be glad and Rejoice, and give Honour to him; For the Marriage of the Lamb is come; and his Wife has made herself Ready.*

Again, Of the *Spouse*, we may be as sure, That it is the *Church*. *Eph. 5. 23.*
The

The Husband is the Head of the Wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church. And Ver. 25. Husbands Love your Wives, even as Christ also Loved the Church. Now, as the Church is nothing but the Company of the Faithful ; So every Believing Soul is a particular Spouse, as the Church is a general ; Betrothed by Faith, United by Love, and Longing for the Consummation above.

Next, For the Heavenly Good designed by these Nuptials, Could we rightly Conceive, and worthily Consider it, What more Glorious, more Advantageous, more Delicious, could we ever find, in this World or the next ? 'Tis great and Sweet, To *Serve* the King of Kings ; much more, to be number'd among his Friends and *Domesticks* ; More still, To be called the *Sons* of God, and the *Brethren* of Christ ; But the most of all, (if so we may be admitted to speak,) That any should ever be called the *Spouse* of God, and the Royal Consort of his Throne, of his Crown, and of all his Titles. This is indeed, by way of highest Eminence, To have a *Name, better than of Sons, and of Daughters.* *Isa. 57. 5.* Not only to See God, and Speak to him ; But to be made even One Spirit with him. *1 Cor. 6. 17.* *He that is Joined to the Lord is One Spirit ; Transformed into his Likeness. 1 Job. 3. 2.* *We shall*

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shall be Like him. Like him in *Glory* and *Felicity* : Which is more than Tongue can tell, or Heart can Think. *S. Paul*, caught up into *Paradise*, was rapt even out of Himself ; *Whether in the Body*, or out, he could not tell. *1 Cor. 12. 3.* And what he Saw, as well as what he Heard, was *Unexpressible* ; (*ἀπὲρρητα*) Things not possible to be uttered. *v. 4.* For a Soul to be made *One* with the Blessed God, is to be *Absorp'd*, and most delightfully swallowed up in an infinite Ocean of *Sweetness* ; and must needs create a Joy, Compar'd with which, (saith *S. Bernard*,) *all other Pleasantness is Heaviness* ; *all other Sweetness Bitterness* ; *all other Delight but a Trouble.*

But the most amiable *Bridegroom's Embraces* of the Blessed Soul, must be left all to *Admiration*, where nothing can be done by *Expression*. Enquire we rather after the *Qualifications* for our *Admission* ; Which we may Learn, from that which help'd in the *Wise Virgins* : Even their *Virginity*, Their *Prudence*, Their *Light* in the Lamp, their *Oyl* in the Vessel, and their *Waiting* for the *Bridegroom's Coming*.

I. The Spouse of Christ must be a *Virgin* : Tho' it be not necessary, as to the *Body* : For among them whom the Apo-
stle

He Espoused as a Chast Virgin to Christ, there were of the *Married* sort ; whom he instructed in their Conjugal Offices. 1 Cor. 7. But this Spouse must be a Virgin, as to *Believing*, and *Living* : i. e. Not Corrupted in *Faith*, or *Manners* : But keeping the Faith of God's Elect ; and *Escaping* the Pollutions that are in the World thro' Lust.

Again, There must be the Prudence and Wisdom, to Consider and Chuse the Chief and Blessed *End* : And also to take the proper *Method*, and the right *Ways*, that will Lead and bring to it.

Then, for the *Light* in the Lamp ; What is that, but the *Good Works*, by which it is to *shine before men* ? Mat. 5. 16.

' And what's the Oyl in the Vessel, but
' the *Grace* of God's Spirit in the Heart ?
' Particularly The Faith and Love, which
' produce and Feed Good Works. For
' without the Oyl, the Lamp's extinct ;
' and *Without Faith*, it's Impossible to Please
' God. Heb. 11. 6. But because we Be-
' lieve, we therefore *Speak* ; and also Act
' as we ought : And because we Love
' God and Man, We will be *Doing* for both.
Love is the Oyl, that floats above all. The
greatest of the Graces is *Charity*. 1 Cor. 13.
last Ver. It raises us above the World ; To
have our Hearts in Heaven. Yea, It In-
sinuates like Oyl, to Soften and Sweeten
all;

all To make the *Yoke easy* ; and make us in *Love* with our Duty. For in what do we more Delight, than to be Doing for our *Beloved* ? Yea, it reconciles us to *Difficulties* and hardships, which go off sweetly with us on this account. So did our dear Lord do and suffer for us, because he loved us: And so shall we be ready to Do and Endure for Him, and our Brethren ; when indeed we Love 'em.

Once more ; There must be the *Vigilance* and Waiting for our Lord's Coming. *Mat. 25. 13. Watch ye therefore ; For ye know not what Hour your Lord comes.* No Word more frequent in holy Scripture, than this *Watchword*. Nothing more needful than that Duty ; upon which we must be even constantly ; that we be not taken *Tardy*, when call'd away at Uncertainty. Nothing will make us more Happy, than to be found *Ready*. *Rev. 16. 15. Behold, I come as a Thief, Blessed is he that Watcheth, and keepeth his Garments.* He will not Acquaint us with the Time ; That we may ever be upon our Guard ; and not fall into such a dead Sleep ; where we may be catch'd with the saddest Surprise. Tho' without bodily Sleep we cannot subsist, (Even the Virgins so may Slumber, and take their Nap :) Yet it must not run into the wretched *Oscitancy*, and carnal Security.

Every

Every one that is in Care for his Salvation, should every day, Morning and Evening, shut the Door of his Heart, to stop out all other Business; And seriously Bethink himself, That even that very *Day*, or that very *Night*, may be his *Last*. And so wisely Provide, that shou'd it so fall out, he may not be Taken at a dreadful *Loss*.

All do naturally Abhor the Thoughts of *Death*; and are for Diverting their Minds with other Matters. So the Sick Abhors the bitter Potion; yet for the Love of *Life*, he'll take it. And the Wounded Abhors to Look on the cruel *Gash*: yet in order to *Healing*, he curiously *Pries* into it. Thus, no Wise man, but will be more Concern'd about the Loss of his *Soul*, than for the *stroke* of *Death*. And well Bethinking himself, That there's no Age or Hour, when this may not come upon him; 'when all Fruition of this 'World, and all Preparation for the next, 'will be for ever at an End with him; 'Twill so sway and Transform him, That of *Carnal* 'Twill make him *Spiritual*, and of a *Sinner* a *Saint*. And at Last, more Desiring, than *Dreading* his Lord's Coming.

Thus *Remembering the End*, He'll not do amiss. *Ecclus. 7. Last Ver.* Supposing himself ready to touch the *Tribunal* of the Judge Eternal, will he then, upon the very

ry Way thither, Affront and provoke his Judge? Will he that's Condemn'd to Death, and going to *Execution*, Laugh and Joke, and please himself with the Thoughts of Whores, or Honours, or Traffick, or Money? No; unless he be a *Fool* or *Mad*. Yet we are all under the Sentence of such *Condemnation*; not a child of *Adam*, that has any Exemption. And what's our *Life*, but a continual *Race* to Death? Shall we then, in this *Journey*, which is so short, and soon will be at an End, Think, and Talk, and busy our selves about nothing but our Pleasure, or Lucre, or Honour? Not to say, worse Matters; the Enormities, the Debaucheries, the Villanies in which so many do Plunge themselves? O what's this, but to sleep to all that is worthy and serious? And only wake to that which is Ludicrous and Impious? To Dream, and Dote, and Forget, and Lose our selves, as to all our most weighty Concerns?

Well may our Lord call upon us again and again, To *Watch*. And well for those that are Rowz'd by his Call; To Remember where they are, and whither Going. And so to *Exert* all their Care and Endeavour, to fill their Lamps with Oyl, and keep 'em Burning; That when the Cry shall sound, *Behold the Bridegroom Comes*, They may run with Courage, and find

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Entrance into the Marriage. But wo to them, who, making Light of the Greatest thing in the World, Stop their Ears to the Scripture-Calls, Put out their Lamps, Fall asleep; are for ever Shut out: And then, in vain, Cry *Lord, Lord, Open to us.*

C H A P. VII.

Of the Prize.

AFTER the Parables, there remain now to be explicated but *Two Terms*, One of the *Prize*, and the other of the *Crown*. The former we have, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *They that Run in a Race, Run all; But One receiveth the Prize: So Run, that ye may obtain.* And that the Apostle here means the Heavenly Bliss, we may learn from Phil. 3. 13, 14. *Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are before, I press towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Tho' the Prize which the Princes of this World usually do offer is no great matter; yet that in Heaven cannot chuse but be every way the most Rich and Splendid; whether we look upon the God that gives it, who is the *King* of infinite Power and Magni-

Magnificence, that has *set up his Glory above the Heavens*. Psal. 8. 1. Or whether we look upon the Champions, to whom it is proposed, even his own Sons, and Christ's *Brethren*; whom their Father, be sure, would never Invite to the *Race*, If there were not a *Prize* worth the Desires, and the *Ambition* even of the Children of the most High.

But that which most concerns us here, is to see what it is to *Run* to this Prize; And how we shall *Run*, so that we may *Obtain*. Our *Running* to the Prize, is to keep in the way of God's Commands. For the *Course* here is *the Law of the Lord*. Psal. 119. 2. *Blessed are the Undeiled in the Way, that walk in the Law of the Lord*. And Ver. 32. *I will Run the way of thy Commands, when thou shalt Enlarge my heart*. Now thus to *Run*, that we may *Win*, *Three* things are requisite; That we should keep close to the *Course*, That we should *Hast* and *Persevere* in it, And that we should go out and Proceed in the Strength of our *Lord*.

I. We must not strike out of the *Course*. For they that Wander from it, may *Lose* all, Tho' they go never so swift; Because it is at *Rovers* and *Uncertainty*. Whereas the Apostle, by his Practice, 1 Cor. 9. 26. *I so Run, not as Uncertainly*; Teaches us to keep

keep in a direct Line strait on to the Mark ; without *Deviating* to the Right or Left. Thus for Instance, In *Loving my Neighbour as my self*, I Run directly to the Prize. But in Loving him, to the Contempt of God , and setting him up as my *Idol* , I miss my way , and Warp aside on the *Right*. And the more *Ado* I make , in Adoring that Person , and heaping Benefits unreasonably upon him, the more still I am out, and miss my Way. Again, If I Love him less than I should , *Seeing my Brother have Need, and shutting up my Bowels of Compassion from him* ; I Deviate then to the *Left* , and am in no fair Tendency to the Prize , Tho' I do some Good Works ; Because I Love not my Neighbour as I should : *i. e.* Not doing, as I, in his case, would reasonably Expect. And the same Rule will hold also in other Virtues, which have all their *Extremes* on both sides ; and as far as we Warp to either, so far we are out of our Way to the Prize.

II. Another Requisite here, is to make Hast , and Persever in our Course. Now to *Love much* , is in this case , To make much Hast. *Psal. 112. 1. Blessed is the man that Feareth the Lord , that Delights greatly in his Commands : and is Fervent in Spirit , Serving the Lord. Rom. 10. 11.*

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‘ When our Hearts are so Set upon it,
 ‘ Then we are like to make somewhat
 ‘ of it. And to Persever, is not to Flag
 ‘ and Cease, But *Endure to the End, that*
 ‘ *we may be Saved.* Mat. 10. 22. Tho’
 this sounds Hard, To make such *Hast*, and
 yet not be *Tir’d* out: For they that Run
 very Swift, are us’d quickly to have enough
 of it, and glad to Rest. True it is: And
 therefore, so Few do Obtain. But he
 that will Win the Prize, must both make
 Speed, and also Hold on: When so much
 is to be done, and so short a While, where-
 in to do it.

Now here, in order to Succeed, Take
 Pattern by them that Run, Tho’ but for
 a poor perishing Reward: *They Lay aside*
every Weight, and strip off their Cloaths,
 that they may be *Expedite* and nimble for
 the purpose. Thus are Christians much
 more Concern’d to Manage themselves,
 for Gaining a far more *Exceeding and Eter-*
nal Weight of Glory; To throw by the
 Cumber of their *Worldly Cares*, and throw
 off the Garments of their *Carnal Lusts*, and
 Lay down all the *Inordinate Affection* for
 things on Earth. After this, Not to Glo-
 ry in their own Ability; But Hope in the
 Lord: And then, Let ’em complain, If
 in making such *Hast* they are *Weary of*
Well-doing; or if they find not the Ac-
 complishment of that Promise, *Isa. 40.*
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*Last Ver. Waiting on the Lord, to Renew
their Strength; to Run and not be Weary;
To Walk, and not Faint.*

'Tis not here, To Throw away what
we have of the World: But to sit
Loose to it, and little Care for it: And
to Possess it, as if it were none of
our Own: And upon every good Call,
and proper Occasion, be very Ready
to Part with it: And (Like the Apo-
stles and first Followers of our Lord,)
Willing to let all Go: That we may
make sure of Him, and find Acceptance
with him.

III. Seeing, in a Race all Run, but one
Receiveth the Prize; And that One is the
Holy One, who Rejoiceth as a Strong man,
to Run a Race, Psal. 19. 15. No Man has
Ascended up to Heaven, but he that came
down from Heaven; saith our Lord, Job.
3. 13. No man, but with Him, and by
Him; in his Strength, and thro' his Help;
who makes all the true and Living Mem-
bers of his Body, One with Himself, their
Glorious Head; Therefore, in vain shall
they Labour who Run, Tho' they bestow
all their Goods to feed the Poor, and their Bo-
dies to the Fire; If they be not Joined to
Christ, by Faith and Love. Without whom
they can do Nothing. Job. 15. 5. And in
whom, they are made One with the Fa-

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ther and Himself. *Job.* 17. 21. and enabled to do all things, by his Strength. *Phil.* 4. 13.

And, Yet another Way there is of this Conjunction with Christ our Lord, that will wonderfully help us, *in Running the Race set before us*: And that is, The Union of the inward *Eye* with Him, who Himself is the *Prize* to be won. For tho' Christ, (as a *Man*,) did himself Run to the Prize; Yet as he is *the True God*, and *Eternal Life*, He Guides, and Leads, and brings us to Himself. And there's Nothing so Animates and Heartens us on, as *Looking unto Jesus*; When our eyes are ever towards the Lord, Being so United, Fasten'd to, and Fix'd upon the most Inviting Glorious Prize, We neither Hear nor See what any Say or Do, that stand about us: Let 'em Laugh or Cry, Mock or Applaud, We are as persons *Unconcern'd*, and Regard not their Judgment. It's a small thing to us; who are as Deaf and Blind, little or nothing minding the matter. And the Nearer still we come to the *End*, the Clearer do we discern the Prize. And that gives us new Strength and Mettle; to make us lift up the feeble *Knees*, and stretch forth the Tired *Limbs*; and Forget the *Weariness* upon us, for the *Joy that is before us*.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Crown.

EVery one that strives for the Mastery is Temperate in all things : They do it to obtain a Corruptible Crown ; but we an Incorruptible. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Now, this Strife is not in a Race, but a Fight. And so, 'tis of a nature somewhat different from the former ; As is also the Reward, which before was a Prize, now a Crown. I Fight, (saith the Apostle,) *Not as one that beateth the Air.* Ver. 26. And again, 2 Tim. 4. 6. *I have Fought a good Fight.* Now, what is this Crown, but Eternal Life and Bliss ? Call'd a *Crown of Righteousness* : ' Because God gives it to his Servants, as ' the Effect, (Tho' not the Desert,) of ' their Righteousness : And because he ' is Righteous, and true to his own Word, ' in Giving what he Promised ; Tho' it ' could never be Merited. Therefore he ' does not Pay it to 'em, but Bestows it ' upon 'em. 'Tis also called the *Crown of Life* : Not as it Rewards a Short *Virtuous* Life, But as it comprizes all the Blessed Enjoyments of that Glorious Life, which is Everlasting. And 'tis a *Crown of Glory*, As importing the highest of

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‘ all Honour, to which they are Exalted,
 ‘ who are so Crowned. And O how
 Glorious must it needs be, When God
 himself is said to be this Crown of Glo-
 ry, and for a *Diadem of Beauty to his Peo-
 ple?* *Isa.* 28. 5. The most Glorious
 God himself, who (from a Low estate)
 has Rais’d ’em so exceeding High, will
 be their everlasting Glory. *Isa.* 60. 19.
Thy God, Thy Glory. The Conquerors
 Crowns will be the Brighter, as their
 Number is the smaller.

But what is the Fight, in which we
 must strive for Victory, To Win the
 Crown of Glory? ’Tis a fierce Fight, a
 perilous Struggle; Compar’d with those
 bloody Combats in the *Roman* Theatre:
 Where they Fought with Fists, or Clubs,
 or Thongs, in a Violent and furious man-
 ner. Yet there the *Agonists* grappled on-
 ly with *Men*, like themselves; with *equal*
 Arms; and but for a Corruptible Crown,
 or *Garland* made of Leaves; and under
 the hazard sometimes of their Lives; but
 mostly, of Derision only, and the publick
Infamy. Whereas *Christians* are to Fight
 with Enemies, which they cannot See;
 (tho’ they *Feel* ’em too much;) And
 such as are very Many, and very Migh-
 ty, and full of all Subtilty. They are
 to Grapple with very *Unequal Forces*; Be-
 fore God and his Angels; for a Crown
 of

of *Eternal Life*; and under the hazard of a most dreadful *Endless Death*. All this, not in a *Mock-Fight*, but the most *Real* and *Terrible*. For the *Antagonists* are *Devils*; call'd in Scripture, *Lyons*, *Dragons*, *Serpents*: *Enemies* also, that have their *Accomplices* of our own *House*, *The Lusts* that war against our *Souls*. 1 Pet. 2. 11. And all this *Fighting*, is even at the same time, that we are *Running*; To Let and binder us in the *Race* set before us: Where we must Fight with our *Hands*; as well as Run with our *Legs*.

O did Christians better Bethink themselves of this, Sure they would not, they could not so easily pass away their *Time*, in *Playing* and *Trifling*, in *Prating* and *Drinking*, in *Heaping up Wealth*, and *Hawking after Honour*: as if all were *Safe*, and no *Danger*. But hear the *Apostle* Sounding an *Alarm*, to another sort of *Encounter*. Eph. 6. 11, 12. Put on the whole *Armor of God*, that ye may be able to stand against the *Wiles of the Devil*. For we wrestle not against *Flesh and Blood*; but against *Principalities*, against *Powers*, against the *Rulers of the Darknes of this World*, against *Spiritual wickedness*, (or wicked *Spirits*) in *High places*. Good God! What a *Summons* is here! How *Vehement* the *Contest*! How full of *Terror*! Where need so many sorts of *Arms*, as are here enumerated;

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Such mighty *Efforts*, and stout *Resistance*:
Yea, (to fetch in Aids from Above,) all
manner of *Prayer*, and *Supplication* in the
Spirit; and *Praying always*, and *with all*
Perseverance. Yet O how many of us car-
ry, as if we were neither concern'd to
Run in the *Course*, nor to *Contend* in the
Fight.

But what shall we do in this terrible
Agony, that we may carry the *Victory*?
The Apostle intimates to us, *1 Cor. 9. 25.*
(where he says,) *Every one that Strives for*
the Mastery is Temperate in all things. The
Champions that were Ambitious but of a
Leafy Withering Crown, deny'd 'emselves
every thing, that might *Enervate* and wea-
ken the *Body*, to render it more unfit for
that, but *Ludicrous Combat*: As *Fulness* of
Meat and Drink, and *Liberties* of *Dalli-*
ance; and *Cumber* of *Domestic Business*;
and all such things whatever, *Delightful*
or *Gainful*, that might be any *Impediments*
in the way to their *Victory*. And when
'tis for the *Crown of Glory which fades not*
away, that we are to *Exert our Prowess*
and *Activity*, O how much more should
we *Abstain* from all things that pull down
the *Soul*, and *Disable* it, both for the *Race*
and the *Fight*! And what are those but
the same, that make the *Body too Lusty*?
Such as *Luxurious Fare*, *Excess of Sleep*,
Idle Vagaries, *pleasurable Diversions*, *Jesting*,
Trifling,

Trifling, Gaming, Toying ; Little Reading, Less Praying, No meditating ; No Tears for Sins, No *Fruits meet for Repentance* ? Here, he must be more *Abstemious*, that means to be *Victorious*. Take heed to *your selves*, (is our Lord's own Caution,) *Lest at any time your Hearts be Overcharged.* Luk. 21. 34.

But the Diet of the Soul, which will give it Strength for the Battel, is Abstinence and Fasting ; its Recreation, Prayer and Devotion : Its Purge, Confession of Sin : Its Joy, Tears for great Transgressions ; and its Triumph, Crucifixion of fleshly Lusts. Thus saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 9. last V. *I keep under my Body, and bring it in Subjection.* With Watching and Self-denying, I weaken the Fort, where the Enemies plant themselves. I disable the *Flesh*, for Rebelling against the *Spirit*. That I who would Preach others into *Heaven*, may not fall short of it my self. Who does not Tremble at those Words of the great Apostle, *Least that by any means, when I have Preached to others, I my self should be a Castaway* ? If the *chosen Vessel*, one that was caught up into Heaven, and had such a *Prepossession*, was under any such *Apprehension* ; O which of us may not be fill'd with Dread of *Rejection*, If we are too Nice and Delicate, to Use any such Methods of Prevention ? Surely, we have

small reason to be Confident of Victory and the Crown, If we will no better bestir us, to get over the known *Obstacles* that Lye in our way. And how amazing is their Stupidity and Blindness of Heart, who are for doing none of this self-denying Work ? Who are so far from Abridging themselves of *Lawful* things, that they make as bold as they please with the *Forbidden Fruits* : And yet Live Secure and Jolly ; As if they made no doubt of Salvation, and the Crown of Glory ? But still does this add to the sad Proof, That the Flock of Christ is a *Little Flock* : And of the *many Called*, that *Few are Chosen*.

To thee therefore, Good God ! I thy Servant, and Son of thy Handmaid, do betake my self ; Desiring with all my Soul, the Heavenly *Prize*, and Glorious *Crown*, which thou hast Prepared for them that Love thee. I know the Length of the *Course*, and the Difficulty of the *Contest*. I confess before thee, who *Searchest the Hearts and Reins*, How small, and even none is my Virtue. Nor am I ignorant of the mighty Forces and cruel Rage of my Invisible Enemies ; who can never Digest it, That we little Worms should ever be Call'd up to that Supreme Glory, whence Pride threw them down. Enlighten my Mind ; that I sleep not in Death. Increase
my

my Faith, that I Faint not by the Way. Let thy Grace Fight for me; Least the Enemy ever come to say, *I have prevail'd against him.* And what I Beg for my self, I pray also for all my Brethren; Those especially in Higher Stations; Where their Danger is so much greater, as their Post is Nobler. And as much Brighter as will be their Crown, if they Acquit themselves as thy Trusty Agents; So much heavier will be their *Damnation*, If, through their Default, the Souls perish, for which thou didst shed thy precious Blood.

C H A P. IX.

The Close of the whole Work.

HAVING open'd these *Twelve* Considerations of the *Saints Eternal Felicity*, The Conclusion is very apparent; That this Felicity is the Greatest and Highest Attainment in the World: most Worthy and most Needful, in the First place, by all Men, to be Sought and Pursu'd. But the Way to Find and Secure it, so Strait and Difficult, That unless a Man, (*Postponing* every thing else,) do firmly Resolve, in earnest to Endeavour and Strive hard for it; He'll never get through the
Incum--

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Incumbrances of the Way, To Gain that most Wish'd and Blessed End.

But to set the Whole, in short, before your Eyes, at one View, Let me *Recapitulate* all the Considerations, with their Difficulties, for an *Epilogue*.

I. We have consider'd the Eternal Felicity, under the Title of a *Kingdom*. Such it is, in the highest and best Sense: But here's the *Difficulty* we have seen annexed; That the Kingdom of Heaven suffers *Violence*, and the Violent take it by Force.

II. We have consider'd it, under the Name of the *City of God*, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, of which most Glorious things are spoken: But there also we found no small Bar and *Impediment*; That the Citizens of this *World* cannot be *Fellow Citizens with the Saints*. And 'tis hard to Live in the World, and not to be of the World.

III. We have Consider'd it, under the Name of the *House of God*; In which are many happy *Mansions* and Fruitions: But have found the Gate of it so *Strait*, That it cannot, without much ado and hard *Striving*, be Enter'd.

IV. We have Consider'd it, under the Name of *Paradise*; as a Place of all the sweet-

sweetest Delights ; But have found withal,
At how great a *Price*, not of Gold or Silver,
but of Tears and Blood, our Lord
Bought it. And all that will Enter it,
must take up their Cross and Follow him.

V. We have Consider'd it, as the *Treasure hid in a Field* ; truly Inestimable : But
not to be Gain'd by him that Found it,
without Selling all that he had for it.

VI. We have Consider'd it, as the most
Precious Pearl. For which also The Purchaser
must Let go all his Goods, to Buy
it.

VII. We have Consider'd it , as the *Diurnal Penny* ; A Reward infinitely beyond
the sound of the Word. But not to be
Given to any, but such as have bestir'd
and well Acquitted themselves in the
Vineyard.

VIII. We have Consider'd it, under the
Notion of a *great Supper* : The most Rich
and Splendid Entertainment. And have
found all those to be Debarr'd of it, who
have more mind to the Trash of this
World.

IX. We have Consider'd it, as the Joy
of our Lord, unspeakable and full of Glo-
ry :

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ry: To which they only are Admitted, who with faithful Care and Application, have Improv'd the *Talents* committed to their Trust. The rest are Doom'd to outer Darknefs.

X. We have Consider'd it, as a *Royal Marriage*, yielding matter of unknown Refreshment: From which will be excluded all that Indulge to *Sleep* and *Sloth*; and busy not themselves in getting *Grace*, and doing *good Works*; still Waiting, and *Watching* for the heavenly Bridegroom's Coming.

XI. We have Consider'd it, as the richest *Prize*; which they only go away with, who take heed to steer aright; and stretch hard, to run with *Speed* and *Perseverance* in the Course.

XII. We have Consider'd it, as a *Crown*; the Crown of Life and Glory, which they alone shall win and wear, who keep the Faith, and work Righteousness; and in stoutly Fighting for Mastery, *Overcome* the Enemy.

Look which way thou wilt then, and under what *Notion* soever thou takest the *Heavenly Felicity*, Thou wilt find, that it is not to be Obtained by thee, If thou do
not

not put forth thy self with all thy Powers of Mind and Body. And whoever would be for ever Happy, (which none in his Wits, can chuse but wish,) He must shake off *Sloth* and *Dulness*: And for such a high and Glorious Reward, Gird himself in earnest to do all the Good he is Com-manded, and to Bear all the Evil, to which he is Called. Preferring no Affairs of the present World, to this grand Con-cern for the World to come. And still keeping in mind the Apostle's word; '*Acts* 14. 22. *That we must, thro' much Tribula-tion, Enter into the Kingdom of God.* And 'that of our Lord, *Mat.* 10. 22. *He that Endureth to the End, shall be saved.* And 'Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou Faithful until Death; and I will give thee the Crown of Life.*

APOST.

A
P O S T S C R I P T,
C O N T A I N I N G

*The Translator's Animadversion
and Resolution, upon a Review
of the Premises.*

THUS have I laid open a Light shining in a dark place, and not only done Justice to an Adversary, but endeavour'd to make him Friendly to my Country. Where he comes armed with good and lawful Weapons, I press him in for Publick service; and as far as he rightly uses the force of his Wit, I cite him as an Evidence for the Truth. But as oft as he makes any Excursions, wide of the way to that Blessed Place which he describes; I let my Reader see how effectually the main Supporters of their Church's Infallibility can confute their own Pretensions.

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Yet must I own a farther Design which here I have, To find my own happy Account in the benefit of that glorious Representation, whereof I give the Recommendation: That while I take pains to Allure and Win the Hearts of others, I may not abide still cold, or but Lukewarm my self. When conscious I am, That no ones Concern in this matter can be greater than my own, To look out, and Pry into the End of our Faith, and so to Fight the good Fight, as to Lay hold on Eternal Life.

For what a little while longer is it, my Soul, that I shall be an Inhabitant of this Earth, where shortly my Place will never know me any more? And should not the main of my Care then be for the amazing Future, what shall become of me elsewhere For ever, as soon as I am out of all here? Thus may Death come and Dispossess me, within a very few Days or Hours: And then, After Death the Judgment. So quickly may I know my Sentence, and find my Eternal State fix'd and Determin'd. But be it so; yet cheer up, my Soul, Tho' thou must pass that gloomy Vale, appointed for the Thoroughfare of all men Living. For does not that Grace of God which brings Salvation, (appearing to me, and conferr'd upon me,) give me boldness to Hope, (thro' his Goodness who first gave me my Being, and has, ever since, most kindly chosen my Inheritance,) That even then, I shall be under no
doleful

doleful Destitution; But set up Higher, and furnish'd abundantly Better than ever? To have a certain Dwelling place, and an Everlasting Habitation: Even that House Eternal in the Heavens, full of all Good things, which will more Out-vye the stateliest Palaces of Nobles, and brightest Courts of Princes, than any of those can surpass the poorest Cabins of Beggars: (A House) in that wonderful City, which is Greater and Wider than Mortal Eye can Take the Prospect; built of richer Materials than any our Gold or Jewels; and Peopled with Inhabitants yet more Precious than all the Buildings: And this City, in a Kingdom of immense Extent, and all over a Paradise of unconceivable Pleasure: Where every one of the Subjects are Kings, that live at perfect Ease, and in Fulness of Joy, most highly Favoured, and dearly Loved by the Infinite Founder, God Blessed for ever.

But what do I thus Amusing my self, and humouring my Genius with the Schemes of such noble Fabricks, boundless Territories, and splendid Entertainments? When that of the Apostle (ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς) 1. Joh. 3. 2. strikes all our curious Inquisitions dead. For it does not yet Appear what we shall be. No: Every Discovery here comes so exceeding Short, as to leave the biggest part of all still to the dim Ken of Faith. Yea, even that which is call'd The Revelation of Jesus Christ, does
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but Dress it up in such Metaphors as Regale the outward Sense, and best suit with our present Frame. Whereas Heaven indeed has nothing so mean, as Gold and Pearl and Precious Stones. And when even the Life of Grace, now wrought in us, is yet much Hidden from us, Col. 3. 3; O how shall we comprehend the so far Superior Life of Glory that waiteth for us? 'Tis even as far above my Knowledge, as my Merits.

And what are all the finest Iconisms of Fancy, and all the highest Entertainments of Sense, all that chiefly Takes in the World, and gives the most agreeable Gratification to Flesh and Blood; All which makes the most celebrated Grandees upon Earth bug and value themselves, as well as to be Admired or Maligned by others; Be it Money or Dignity, Houses or Goods, Lands and Commands, State and Attendance, Dainties and Dresses, Diversions and Recreations, the Fat and the Sweet; and all the very utmost Attainments and Enjoyments, so much courted and applauded by the Men of this World? O what very obscure and dull Shades of Heaven's Joys and Glories! What flat and faint Delineations of the Saint's Fruitions! While we go to frame a Judgment only by such kind of Objects as here we See and Feel, what do those Sensations and Comparisons but Cloud the Glories which they would set off, and indeed rather Abuse than Instruct us? When the very Least Inheritor above looks not down,

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down, but with utmost Disdain upon all the largest Possessions here below: And even the Beggar in Abraham's Bosom has now a Spirit too big to take up with the Dominions of any Monarch in the World. Yea, whoever are there once Admitted and Advanc'd, are quite out-grown all those Toys and Trifles, that were the Play-things of their Nonage and Infant-State; which yet do still take up all the little Souls of this World's Children; who are so wholly intent upon the present Life, that they count all's Lost together with it; and shake their Heads, as much condoling the forlorn state of the Dead; tho' such as Dye in the Lord, and their Dying day be their Coronation day, which o' the sudden, prefers and raises 'em to such Fulness and Honour, compar'd with which, all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of 'em make but a very contemptible Figure. In a word, Heaven's Goods and Joys are extremely too big for all our Words: Yea, abundantly more and better than we can now tell how to Think. Nor can any of the Emblems and Figures by which we are taught to apprehend it, ever reach it.

The liveliest Description, in Miniature, may be that of the Eagle-ey'd Apostle, even there where he threw the Veil over it, as Inscrutable; that 1 Joh. 3. 2. We shall be Like him, for we shall see him as he is. Like him,] in Quality, tho' not Equality of Purity and Glory. Renewed and Refined after
the

the holy Image of the ever Blessed. When we shall be stript of all those defiled Garments, that now make us asham'd of our selves; and every thing that's Imperfect shall be done away. When the poor Catachrestic Perfection of Viators shall be found Consummate in the Comprehensive; Who will be fortify'd and embolden'd even to Look Divine Majesty in the Face; which will fill and overwhelm 'em with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory. I dare say no more: I cannot. No! 'Tis only Heaven it self must well and truly Inform us what Heaven is.

But when I Look for things so much above all the brightest Ideas that I am able to form in my Mind; O my Soul, What manner of person ought I to be in all my Life? And what shall I ever do for Him, who has made such wonderful Preparations for me? O what can I offer to Advance, that shall any way answer such Riches of Grace, such Wonders of Love? King of Glory! I am utterly unworthy to Serve thee. Lord of Love! I am not able so much as to Think how deeply and Eternally thou hast Oblig'd me. O how poor and little is the All, that ever I have yet done! More and better still I would do. But what can I once imagine towards the Purchase of that Inheritance incorruptible and undefil'd, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for them who are kept by the Power of God through Faith to Salvation? 1 Pet.

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1. 4, 5. *Nothing but the Blood of the Son of God could ever be a Price to reach its Worth. When therefore I have done my Best, Yet will I humbly wait for Eternal Life, as the free Gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; And with all my Soul bless the Father of all Mercies, that has given me any good Hope through Grace: And the poor imperfect Life which now I live, shall be, by the Faith of the Son of God, who Loved me and gave himself for me, Supported with the hopeful Expectation of that most holy and Happy Life, which hereafter I shall Lead for ever with the Lord.*

He tells his Little Flock, Luk. 12. 32. It is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom. To Give you,] for his Son's sake; Not Pay you, for your Work sake; that Kingdom,] which was never bought but once, and never will be so again. And his Apostle is very express, Eph. 2. 8. Ye are saved by Grace, through Faith; and that not of your selves: It is the Gift of God. Yet are there Babylonish Merchants of another Opinion; Too high, to be there any Dealers, If they shall not put in as Purchasers. And why should the Key keepers stand without, when they have the Power in their own Hands, to Help themselves? Magis Honorificum (said our Chapman) habere ex Merito, quam ex solâ Donatione. 'Tis more for the Saints Honour, to win it by their Desert, than

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to take it of mere Courtesy. Never consulting
God's Honour, To bestow it, (as he does) up-
on the Unworthy; and to let all that are
Willing, come and take it freely. Rev. 22.

17.

But shall I then sit still, folding my hands to
Sleep, and do nothing, to work out my own
Salvation? Far from me be that Resolution.
Nor ever dare I so Disobey my Lord and Savi-
cur, when he bids me Strive to Enter, and
Labour for that meat which endures to
everlasting Life. No: For still is the Que-
stion pertinent, What must I do to be Saved?
Tho' never can I do any thing to the Purchase
of it, yet still must I be Fitting up for it:
And by patient Continuance in Well-doing,
seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality;
that God may render to me Eternal Life.
For Good works are still Via Regni, the
ready Road to Glory. Tho' Christ has merited
fully, and God, for his sake, Gives Freely,
Yet is my Obedience Necessary; and as I hope
to be Happy, I must be Busy, and full of care
to Purify my self, and Live Godly, Righ-
teously, and Soberly; yea, I have quite Lost
my Way, when I am off this Duty.

For being one of those poor Labourers, to
whom my Lord promises the richest Donative,
if I do but my Days work in the Vineyard;
How Vain and Assuming should I be, to look
for the Reward, without setting my self about
the Business? And yet no less Absurd and Ar-
rogant,

regant, to reckon that I had Deserved it, by such my Service. When the truth is, It comes to me, not for my unworthy Labour, but of his gracious Promise; whose Kingdom is no Debt to me, as my Obedience is for certain Owing to Him. Yea, by it he makes me Meet for the Inheritance of his Saints in Light. When otherwise, I am in no Tendency thither my self, nor ever like to Edify, but rather Scandalize others; Sadd'ning the hearts of some, and helping to Harden the rest; whence Wo would be to me, for such Offence coming by me.

But my pious Affection, my Heaven'y Disposition, and exemplary Conversation, are the good Omens, and most comfortable Prognosticks of my future Exaltation, my certain Glorification, and everlasting Salvation. For what is the Spiritual Life, but the First-Fruits and very Initials of Eternal Life? What's Grace, but Glory in the Bud? And what Heaven, but God's Crowning of his own Good work? How does it therefore concern me, my Soul, with the bigbest Care, to Attend the Kingdom of God within me, as ever I expect that Kingdom of Heaven which is before me? To cherish the Seed of his Grace, and daily to be Cultivating and improving the New Life, Till it grow up to, and End in that most blissful Life, which will never End?

For, to Lay hold on Eternal Life is not rudely to Snatch it, without any previous Qualification

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lifications for it. No ; but to Take it so as God Gives it ; i. e. To them who acquit themselves faithfully, in the discharge of their Duty. For our Lord gives Eternal Life ; It's true ; But to whom ? See Joh. 10. 28. To them that hear his Voice, and Follow him. As for the Unrighteous, They shall not Inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6. 9. And without Holiness no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12. 14. Heaven is no Asylum nor Receptacle for the Unclean creatures, that were never Washed, Sanctified, Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. 6. 12. No : We cannot Behold his Face, but in Righteousness : Nor shall we be satisfied, If we awake not with his Likeness. Psal. 17. 15. Into the New Jerusalem shall in no wise enter any thing that defiles, or works Abomination. Rev. 21. 27. Unrenewed Sinners have no manner of Fitness for that Holy Place, any more than the filthy Swine to sit at Board, or lie in the richest Bed.

But shall I then madly go and forfeit all the Joy and Glory everlasting, only to escape the Trouble of a present Scowring ; and never be Happy, because I will still be Filthy ? God forbid ; I should so ruin all my Hopes of Heaven's Bliss, and be such an Unclean Vessel, fitting up for Destruction. Tho' I would not scrue up the Terms to such a height and Rigor, as should render Performance Impracticable,

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to Dishearten and hinder all my own and others Endeavour ; Yet here too much Latitude and smoothness of the way, may well raise my Jealousy and distrust, that I am bound for no safe and good End. Where Heaven then is in my Eye, never let me shrink at some rugged Passages on the way : But rather learn to grow in that Love, which will not only Reconcile me to my Duty, but take off even the whole Difficulty, and help to make all that is done for the Beloved, sweet and Easy. When 'tis to Follow my best and dearest Lord, and to be ever with him, whom my Soul, above all, does Love ; At what then shall I stick ? Or will I ever complain ? No : For Love surmounts all the Barrs, and will not so be stopp'd.

We see it in frequent Instances, (tho' some but very sorry ones ;) How will men Tugg for the World, which their Hearts are set upon ? Tea, and Delight even in the Drudgery, when 'tis the sweet Savour of Lucre, that draws 'em on with such Pleasure ? And what pains will even the Lewd Rakes and scandalous Sots be at ? what wretched Shifts will they make, and through what filthy Disgraces will they Scamper ; only for the sake of their odious Uncleaness, and their worse than Brutal Excesses ? Now, shall I be Out done by the silly Lovers of cheating Vanity ; Or by the desperate Lovers of cursed Iniquity, who make the saddest Bargain for themselves, and are at it with
both

both Hands, to work out their own Undoing? When I have that in my Eye, which is better than a thousand Worlds, and that which will stay by me World without end? No, my Soul; Did the Lord call me, not only to the strictest Self-denial, and the hardest Labour, but to Suffering also, even unto Death; Yet would Heaven make infinite Amends for all. And 'twere not only worth while, but the richest Gain, to press towards the Mark, for that glorious Prize; Tho' I went thro' Fire, and thro' Water, to such a wealthy Place. But when he requires of me only to do Justly, to Love Mercy, to walk Humbly with my God, to Mortify exorbitant Lusts, to deny an unreasonable Self; to Live above the Love of a Vain Perishing World, and to keep my self in the Love of God, Looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal Life; (*Things that make for my present Ease and Happiness, Tho' I had no Eye upon the unspeakable Recompence of Reward;*) shall I think it much, or ever Murmur at the Terms? No; I will Admire, I will Adore, and Magnify the God of all Grace, who will be pleased so to Employ me here, that he may Glorify me hereafter; and order me to wait upon him but a little while, that I may Reign with him for ever; and so to manage this transient Flash of Life, that as soon as 'tis Extinct, I may enter upon the blessed Life Immortal.

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But what is there, my Soul, to Tempt my Stay here, or that should engage me to set up my Rest below, and fall in Love with this World? Besides the Sins, the Plagues, and the frequent Uproars, which make it even like the Suburbs of Hell; Let me but well Bethink my self, and what shall I ever find, even at the best, but Imperfection in the place of our present Habitation? Where all are Minors, Pupils, Pilgrims, Valetudinarians, Labourers, Warriors, Sufferers, and Plaintiffs. In what Region dwells the Satisfaction that's Compleat, and Adequate to all my Wishes? But only in that Heaven it self, which alone is the Place of full Possession and open Vision, of sound Health and sweet Rest, of endless Vacation and entire Fruition, of glorious Triumph, and compleat Satisfaction; yea, of all Ease, with the height of Pleasure and Fulness of Joy, to endure for ever.

O my Soul, Be not deceived and abus'd. Do but know and remember thy own Worth and Dignity, So as to value thy self upon thy high Birth, and noble Capacity; As thou derivatest from the Father of Spirits, and art Born of God, to a Kingdom infinitely greater, richer, and better, than all the Kingdoms of the Earth put together. And then, Lay it on like Thy self, and scorn to dabble thy Wings in the Mud of this World. Never take up with those poor dirty Delights, which are the share of such Beasts of the People, as have all their Portion

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in this Life. But aim Higher, and fly Aloft, to unite with the eternal Fountain of thy Bliss, as well as of thy Being; Who is not ashamed to be Called thy God; Because he has Prepared for thee Like Himself, infinitely Good, to make thee the most Happy, and that Eternally. O set thy Affection on things Above, not on things upon the Earth: Let the eye of thy Faith fix and dwell upon those Unseen things, which thou mayst assure thyself are the Best of all things, Because like the Best of all Beings, whom no man hath seen, or can see.

Rouse then, and Chear up, my Soul; Don't say, 'Tis High, I cannot Attain to it: So many Difficulties in the way, I shall never go thro' 'em: I shall never perform the Conditions, nor hold out, and Endure to the End: But Faint and Perish by the way; Lose all that I seem'd to Attain, and Fall short of the blessed Prize at last. Too much ground for such Desponding thoughts, (I confess,) Looking no farther than thy weak sinful Self. But remember who it was did first put thee upon the seeking of his Kingdom, and has brought thee on so far hitherto. Is not he thy Father, that has sown the seed of Life in thy Heart, and given thee that Bent Heavenward, which by Nature thou hadst not, couldst not have? Go forth then in the strength of thy Lord God: And Look unto Jesus who is the Author, Expecting him to be also the Finisher of thy Faith. For has he not said,

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Joh. 11. 40. If thou wouldst Believe, thou shouldst see the Glory of God? *Yes, (thou may'st say,) the Glory of his Power; yea, and of his Kingdom too. For has he not said again, Job. 3. 16. Whosoever Believeth in Him shall not Perish, but have Everlasting Life? Believe therefore, That he who has Begun the Good work in thee, will never Leave me nor Forsake me; But Perfect what concerns me; and bring me to the End of my Faith, the Salvation of my Soul.*

Why art thou cast down then, my Soul, and why so Disquieted within me? Whenever thy Progress through this tiresome World throws thee upon some heavy ways, or under some Stormy Weather, where thou art plung'd in the Water and Mire, in the Deep and Dark; Look up, and persuade thy self, That he who has Helped, will Help thee; and thou shalt yet see better Times, and find fairer Ways; yea, Ways of Pleasantness, and Paths of Peace. Be thou only in Care to Follow thy Lord and Saviour still, whithersoever he Calls thee: And assure thy self, that he has no Design upon thee; but to Save thee. Yea, his Word assures thee, That he gives his Sheep Eternal Life; and they shall never Perish: Nor shall any pluck 'em out of his hands. Job. 10. 28. Tho' true it is, They would Stray, and be Lost, if Left to themselves; yet does his Grace, that
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first Quicken'd 'em, still Secure 'em, till got
past every Hazard, to be ever with the Lord.

What time I am Afraid then, I will
Trust in Him. Tho' I will distrust my self,
and take Heed to my Ways, and be cautious
to avoid the Occasions of Falling: Yet when I
do fall thro' my Frailty, I will not despair of
Rising again, thro' his Mercy; But still
Trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay
my self upon my God: Depending on his
never-failing Word, and his ever-enduring
Mercy, To be Guided by his Counsel, till
receiv'd into his Glory.

Thus shall my Life be a Life of Faith, and
Hope, and Love; a Life of Care and
Pains; and a Life of Prayer and Praise. I
will Believe, to see the Goodness of the
Lord, in a better Life and Place, than this
Land of the Living. I will Hope for what
I see not; and Christ in me, shall be my
Hope of Glory. I will Love Him, who
with an Everlasting Love, hath First Loved
me; and Prepared such unspeakable things,
for them that Love Him. I will be in Care
and dread of Following a Multitude, in the
broad Way, to a Cursed End; Tho' never so
much upbraided with my Singularity, as like
No body. And my continual Concern shall
be, not to Look back, after I have put my
hand to the Plough; Nor to be of them that
draw back to Perdition; But keep my Heart
as well as my Feet, that I decline not from
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the Way of Life. I will give Diligence to make my Calling and Election sure; and so Labour. to work out my Salvation, that I may Enter thro' the Strait Gate, into God's Rest; and there Rest for ever from all my Labour. I will Pray to the Lord, and beg still for more and more of his Grace from Above, To Raise and help me safe and sure thither: Yea, Pray that I may have still clearer Views of Heaven, more eager Longings after it, and a better Fitness for it: That God who has spoken Life to me, would be pleas'd still farther to Renew me, Till he has Completed his gracious work upon me: And then Desire to Loose from hence, and Depart in Peace; and to be where 'tis Best, with Christ, in the Joy of my Lord.

Yea, I will Bless, and Praise the Lord, for what I have already received of his Grace, and Rejoice in Hope of his Glory. So shall my Soul Glory in the God of my Salvation, That however I am Threatned from an Inhospitable perilous World, or its infernal Ruler; I'll be, not only Hopeful, but Joyful in such a Saviour. Because Greater is he that is in me, than he that is in the World: Even the Lord Almighty, able to Subdue all opposing Powers, who will bruise Satan under my feet, and Preserve me to his Heavenly Kingdom.

To him therefore will I commit the Keeping of thee, my Soul, and all that ever con-
cerns

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cerns thy present Safety, and thy Everlasting Felicity. I will still depend upon his Mercy, which I have so Long and Largely Experienced already: And for all (whatever it be,) that I have of Good, whether in Hand or in Hope, To his Name alone will I for ever give all the Praise and Glory.

Let me close this PS. with a sacred Epigram of the Honourable and Heavenly Mr. Herbert.

H E A V E N.

O who will shew me those Delights on high?

Eccho.

I.

Thou, Eccho? Thou art Mortal, all men know.

No.

Wer't thou not born among the Trees and Leaves?

Leaves.

And are there any Leaves that still Abide?

Bide.

What Leaves are those? Impart the matter wholly.

Holy.

Are Holy Leaves the Eccho then of Bliss?

Yes.

Then tell me, What is that Supream Delight?

Light.

Light to the Mind; What shall the Will enjoy?

Joy.

But is there Care and Business with the Pleasure?

Leasure,

Light, Joy, and Leasure! But shall they Persever?

Ever.

An IN-

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I N D E X

Of the Books and Chapters.

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Book. I.

Of the Kingdom of God.

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